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The Ritchies in India

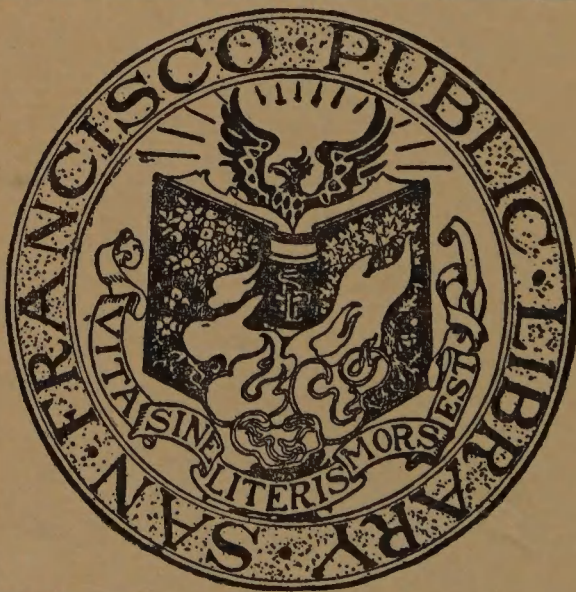
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WILLIAM RITCHIE.



# THE RITCHIES IN INDIA

EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE  
OF WILLIAM RITCHIE, 1817—1862; AND  
PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF GERALD  
RITCHIE

COMPILED AND EDITED  
BY GERALD RITCHIE

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON  
JOHN MURRAY ALBEMARLE STREET, W.  
1920

THE KITCHEN IN  
INDIA

EDITED BY THE EDITOR OF THE  
JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF  
BOMBAY, AND THE EDITOR OF THE  
JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF  
CALCUTTA.

BY GERALD KITCHIN

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DEDICATED TO

M. M.

WORTHY DAUGHTER OF AN HONOURED FATHER

"He prayeth well who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast."





## PREFACE

It happened that in the cold weather of 1882 I met Sir William Hunter at the United Services Club in Calcutta and forgathered with him about my ancestors in the Bengal Service. We discussed William Makepeace Thackeray, "the elephant-hunter of Sylhet," my great-grandfather, and his six sons, all of whom lived and died in India. I was very pleased to lend Sir William *The Memorials of the Thackeray Family*, compiled by an ancestress for private circulation, and to give him all the information I had in my possession about my forebears. The result of our colloquies was worked up by Hunter in a series of articles for the Calcutta *Englishman*, and finally was reprinted in a charming little book, *The Thackerays in India*, published by Henry Frowde in 1897. The following extract will show how Hunter wove the private information with which I supplied him into his researches in public documents as he travelled about India :

"On September 13, 1815, a train of merchants, soldiers, and dignitaries defiled along that road behind the coffin of a civilian struck down midway in his career. I wonder if the chief mourner was a pale-faced little boy of four, who has come to be known in all English-speaking lands as the great-hearted satirist of our age, and the prime master of our full-grown English tongue? For it was the father of William Makepeace Thackeray whom Calcutta was escorting to his grave.

"The year 1815 had been a death-dealing one to the Thackerays in Bengal. It opened with the news that the younger brother of the just-deceased Richmond Thackeray was fallen in a desperate fight in Nepal. On August 14,

1815, Richmond headed the funeral procession of his cousin Henry to the military burial-ground in the southern suburb of Calcutta. And now within a month, on September 13, Richmond was himself carried forth for burial.

“The Thackerays formed a typical family of the Bengal Civil Service in the days of John Company. They threw out branches into the sister services, military and medical, and by a network of inter-marriages created for themselves a ruling connexion both in India and in the Court of Directors at home. The first Thackeray in India went as a covenanted civilian in 1766, and four of his sons, with at least fourteen of his descendants and collaterals, have been traced in the same profession. While wandering over the three Presidencies, I noted down some of their many appearances in the old manuscript records, from the Malabar coast on the extreme south-west to the Sylhet Valley in the far north-east of India. No published account exists of them, but I have been allowed to make use of a private family book of the Thackerays, compiled chiefly by an aunt of the novelist. The two sets of materials, when brought together from the Indian archives and the domestic papers, furnish a curious picture of one of those powerful and compact, but now almost extinct, family corporations which did so much to build up British rule in the East.”

Rigorous accuracy is one of Sir William’s characteristics, and the only trifling error that I can discover in his book is when he speaks of “one of those powerful and compact, but now almost extinct, family corporations which did so much to build up British rule in the East.”

For, as a matter of fact, the old family was by no means extinct, and I now lay before those of the public who take interest in India the domestic affairs of two more generations of the Thackeray family—my father, a celebrated barrister, and my own reminiscences, of a Bengal civilian of 1875–1901, now retired.

Each of these members had to deal with a different branch of the public service which he fully describes. Besides Hunter’s *The Thackerays in India*, my sister-in-law,



Lady Ritchie, wrote in the Biographical Edition to her father's works her impressions of the old family traditions, in the volume *Ballads and Miscellanies*. This is the Thackeray side, the side from which my father inherited his humour, and the story of the ancestors has been as well told as one could wish. Little further mention will be made under this head of ancestors, and only a short mention of the Ritchie forebears is required. They were tenant farmers in Aberdeenshire, and there is little of general interest that is found to tell about them.

It may be objected that there is too much domesticity about these annals to fit them for general publication. On the whole, I find myself opposed to this view. It is not till we touch the private lives of the actors in the Indian Drama that our attention is arrested, and that we realise how interesting is that drama. Indian history is repellent when told by itself in a business way. Under the care of a Hunter it becomes a totally different thing, simply because Hunter realised the value of the personal element. Not until Rudyard Kipling arose did the story of English life in India become fascinating. British-Indian history must be written again some day on the basis of private memoirs, and it is in the hope that these letters and reminiscences may help the historian of the future to understand the common feeling of the Englishman in India that I now put them forth.

G. R.

July 1920.



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**LETTERS OF WILLIAM RITCHIE, 1828—1862**





## CHAPTER I

1766-1813

### OUR THACKERAY FOREBEARS. BIRTH OF WILLIAM RITCHIE

A FEW summers ago I made a solitary expedition to Hadley Green to look up the house and surroundings of my great-grandfather, William Makepeace Thackeray. I found his tombstone on the north-east corner of the church, and sat awhile thinking over the strange combinations that had brought me to this spot, and of my predecessors who died in India. I thought of my great-grandfather's six sons who gave their lives to that country,—William, of the Madras Council, the friend of Sir Thomas Munro, the enlightened Madras Governor; Richmond, the Collector of the twenty-four Pergunnahs, whose office I had filled during my Indian career, and whose house I had occupied, and who will be remembered in history as the father of our great writer; of the young "writer"<sup>1</sup> Webb, who died on the road at the age of nineteen while being carried down to Madras for medical treatment; of the gallant Lieutenant Tom, who fell gloriously in our first Nepalese War in Nepalese territory; of St. John, of the Madras Civil Service, who fell at the taking of a fort from the Mahratta chieftain who on accession refused to surrender it to the British power; of Charles, the barrister and journalist, who fell a victim to drink after living on in the purlieus of Calcutta, providing good things to the *Englishman*, and witty things to the Calcutta world. And I thought, also, of my great-grandfather's handsome daughters, of Emily Shakespear, who had gone out to be a companion to Richmond, and had

<sup>1</sup> The East India Co.'s mercantile term for a young merchant.

died early of cholera in Calcutta, leaving amongst her progeny of nine the *beau chevalier* Sir Richmond Shakespear; and Marianne, who married Colonel Irvine of the Bengal Engineers; of the gifted and unfortunate Sarah Langslow; and of my own grandmother, Charlotte, whose union to John Ritchie of Belhelvie is here recorded, and whose house in Paris was a happy rendezvous to the family.

While I was occupied in this train of thought, two young fellows, taking their Saturday afternoon walk, passed through the churchyard, and, as they approached me, one said, "I see you are looking at William Makepeace Thackeray's tombstone with interest. Can you tell me if he was the great writer? If so, it seems curious that he should be buried in a small churchyard like this one."

"Look at the dates, my friend," I replied. "This William Makepeace died in 1813. He was the grandfather of the writer. And may I mention that I am one of his great-grandsons? It is curious that you should ask me this question, for I can tell you lots of family history, if that might interest you, and it is the first time I have visited this tomb."

William Makepeace Thackeray was the youngest of the large family of sixteen children who were born to Dr. Thomas Thackeray. In 1746 Dr. Thomas had become Head Master of Harrow, which had not yet won for itself its great position among English public schools, and under a "drunken, disorderly, idle head master" had gone down to thirty-three boys. Dr. Thomas was a great success, and in fourteen years quickly brought up the number to two hundred and thirty. He died a month after giving over charge of the headmastership.

The one subject required for the H.E.I. Co.'s Civil Service was book-keeping, and his son W. Makepeace quickly qualified, though his life at Harrow must have given him general culture in abundance. His widowed mother had gratefully accepted a nomination for him, though there was no previous acquaintance with any old Indians. He





MRS. THACKERAY, WIDOW OF ARCHDEACON THACKERAY.

2000

set out for India in the *Lord Camden* in February 1766, aged sixteen, with his mother's Bible, now a precious family heirloom.

Among his fellow-travellers were Thomas Pattle, father of famous daughters, and George Grand. George Grand figures in history as the husband of the Danish girl, Catherine Noel Varle, seduced within eighteen months of marriage by Philip Francis, who had to pay R.50,000 (sicca) in consequence. Mrs. Grand finally became Princesse de Talleyrand, and figured in the annals of the Consulate and First Empire.

There were troublous times at hand when W. M. Thackeray, on his seventeenth birthday, landed at Calcutta in 1766, which must be studied in Macaulay's essays on Clive and Warren Hastings. Five years he was stationed at Headquarters in Calcutta, while Mr. Cartier was Governor, and there he had the opportunity of seeing the inside of official life, and the relations between the English, French, Dutch and Danish Governors. By the age of twenty he had arranged to bring out his two sisters, Jane and Henrietta. "If there is a sensible man in India he will find out Jane," her mother is reported to have said, little dreaming that the "sensible man" who was waiting for her daughter was to become no less a person than the most famous geographer of his day, Major James Rennell. Henrietta, the youngest sister and the beauty of the family, was married to Mr. James Harris, of the H.E.I. Co.'s service, the chief at Dacca.

After five years' service in Calcutta, W. M. Thackeray was sent to Dacca, an eleven days' journey by country boats on the river. Jane accompanied him; Henrietta had gone up previously as a bride with Mr. Harris, a man of the minor Nabob type. At Dacca Jane met and married Major Rennell<sup>1</sup> in 1772 in Calcutta.

By this time Thackeray, aged twenty-three, was ap-

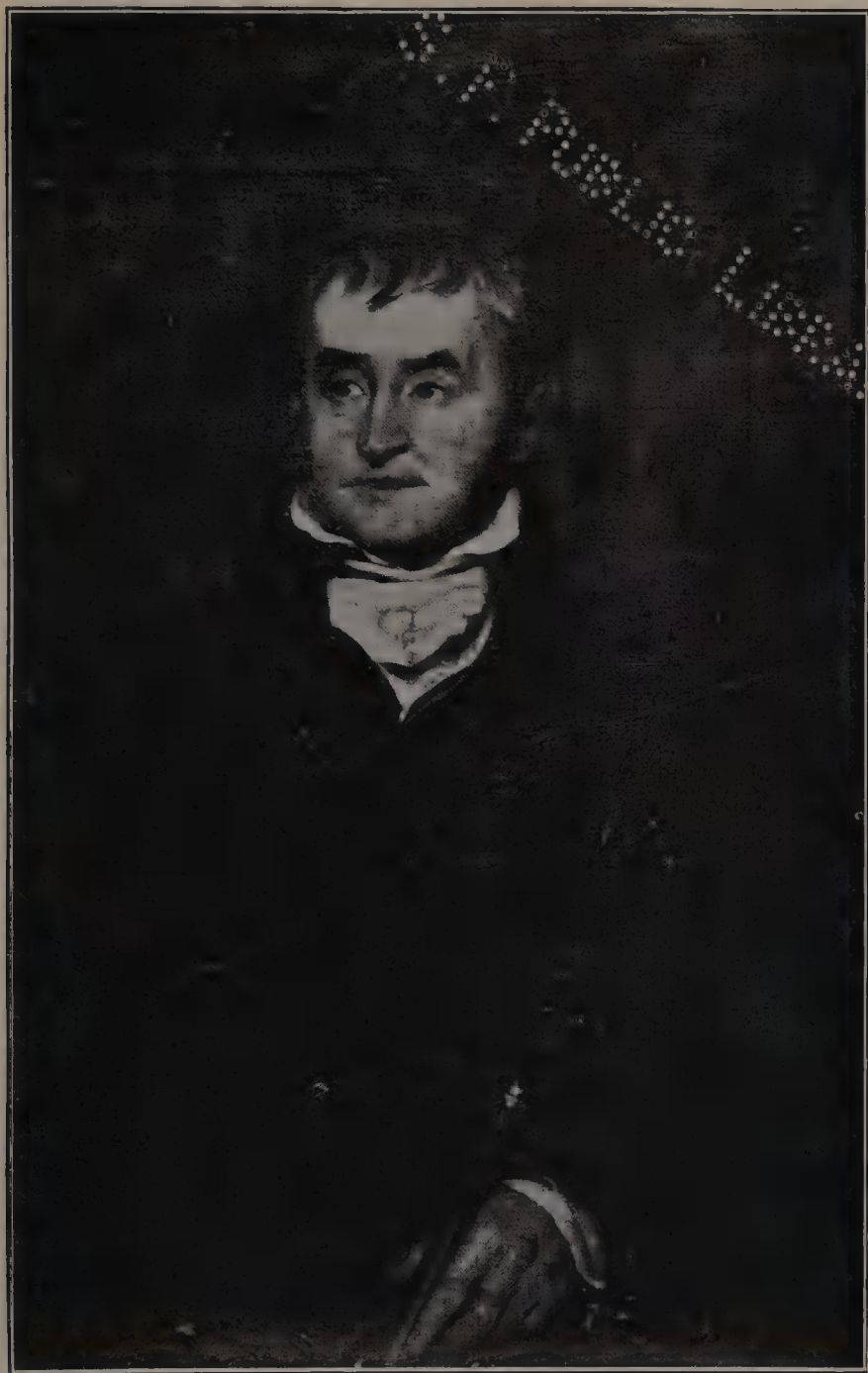
<sup>1</sup> A charming account of the Major is given by Lady Ritchie in the article, "L'Art d'être Grandpère," in her book, *From the Porch*. (Smith, Elder & Co. 1913.)

pointed to the post of the Company's first agent in Sylhet, to be collector<sup>1</sup> of the wild district adjoining Dacca, peopled with turbulent hill-tribes. There he became a collector of revenue, a maker of roads and builder of bridges, an elephant-hunter and shikari, a magistrate, judge, policeman and doctor in one. He not only introduced order and method, but justice and fair dealing quickly made themselves felt in the collection of the Government revenue. He was given leave to construct the first official residence in Sylhet, which is still standing. Sylhet, with its virgin forests and mineral wealth, supplied the materials for the new fortress and city of Calcutta, several hundred miles off at the other end of the great river highway. These things it was William Makepeace's duty to supply in his private capacity. One of his sources of income was the capture of wild elephants. Thackeray's name survives as a mighty hunter of elephants, in which he traded in his private capacity. On one occasion sixteen only out of sixty-six elephants to be supplied to Government survived their march across India. Thackeray boldly brought the matter before a judicial tribunal, sued the Company in the Supreme Court of Bengal, and obtained a decree for £3,700.

After two years of incumbency at Sylhet, in 1774, Thackeray was recalled to the Council at Dacca. In 1775 he paid a visit to Calcutta and fell in love with and married (in 1776) a talented and beautiful girl—Amelia Webb, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Richmond Webb. The young couple soon sailed for England. Thackeray had realised a competence by nine and a half years' hard work. His salaries all that time, according to the strange system of those days, did not amount to £2,000. But he had saved enough by private trade to render himself comfortable for the rest of his days.

In January 1786, William Makepeace and Amelia bought a small property, "a quiet mead with here and there fresh pools of water shining beneath clusters of fair

<sup>1</sup> It was about the first time this term was applied to Englishmen.



W. M. THACKERAY, FATHER OF THE CLAN (1749-1813).





lime trees," at Hadley, Middlesex, made immemorial by the battle of Barnet. At this day, Hadley Green stands unchanged, exactly as it did one hundred and forty years ago with its adjoining woods. Peter Moore, who had married a sister of Amelia's and had belonged to H.E.I. Co.'s Civil Service, had already settled and become Lord of the Manor there. Later on Thackeray's sister Henrietta, after the death of her husband, James Harris, settled there, too. Major and Mrs. Rennell would frequently come over from the heart of London, an hour and a half's drive from Hadley Green. This family party of sisters and brothers-in-law who, after a successful youth in India, settled down in early middle age to so close and affectionate an intercourse in England, is very remarkable. Peter Moore was in the thick of things political, had been gained over by Sheridan, and was leading a busy life of investments and Whig politics which was to end in dire poverty at Abbeville, 1828, when he was seventy-five.

Very different was Thackeray's lot. He was active in local good works, and was a steady churchwarden. He was made guardian to children from India, and I possess two books of his admirable business letters. He loved gardening, and always dressed in a blue coat with brass buttons, or a coloured suit, as the most convenient.

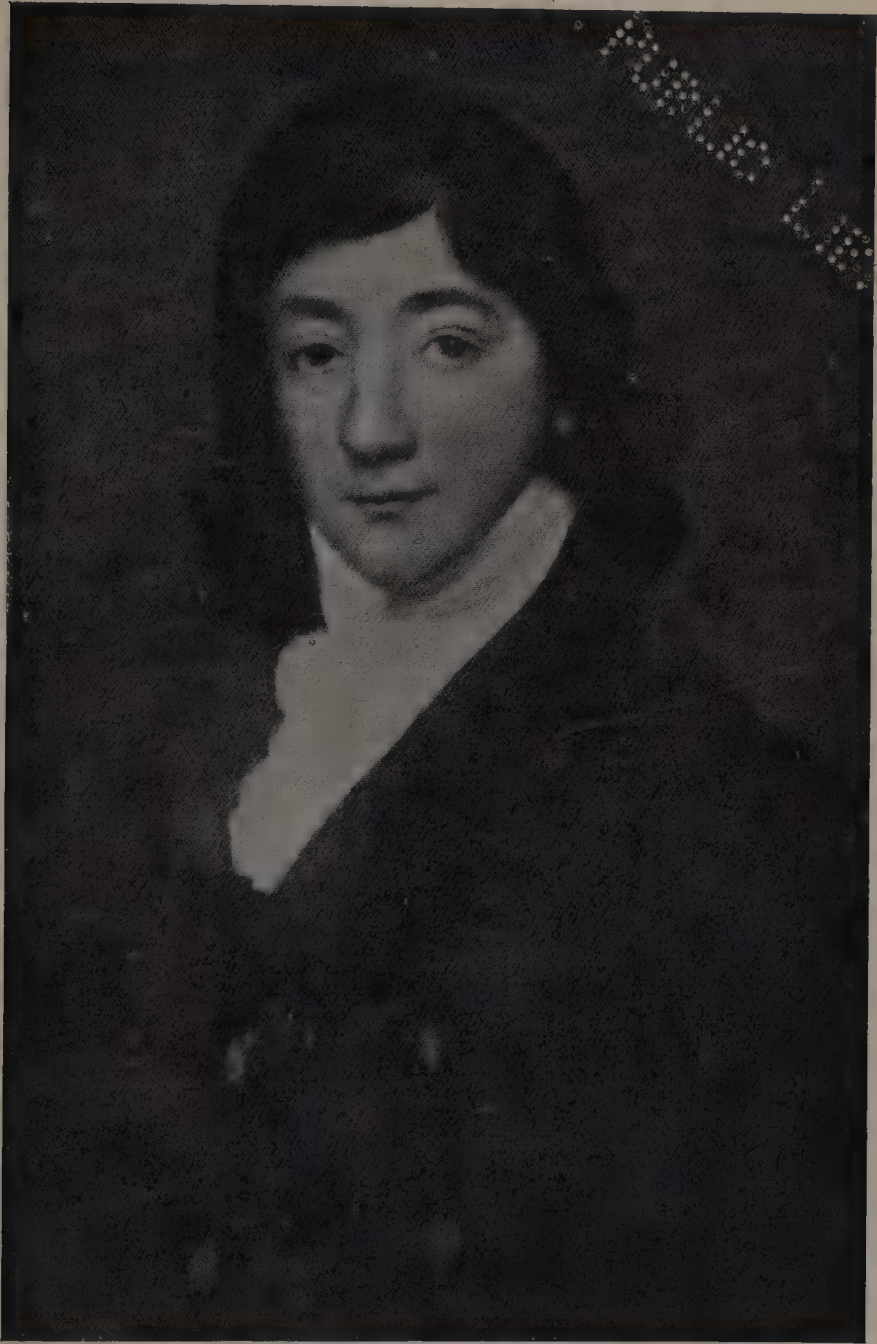
His wife began to present him with children till in 1797 the tale of twelve was complete. They must have been a bright and delightful party. Richmond was sent to Eton. I do not propose for one moment to trespass on Sir William Hunter's excellent terse biographies of these young men and young women to which I refer my readers (*The Thackerays in India*).

While I was Chairman of the Municipality in Calcutta, I had the care of the cemeteries; and, as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee, it was a privilege to look after "those walled-up ghostly settlements, desolate spaces of brick ruins and blotched plaster, reproachful of forgetfulness and neglect," and to care for the repair of Richmond Thackeray's pyramidal tomb. That was something, at

all events, to get hold of. “‘Not under cathedral roofs nor in any consecrated ground,’ wrote the noble Dalhousie on his tablet to a young civilian and soldier who met death hand-in-hand, ‘but amid the jungles or on the furthest frontier of India lie our heroes who died doing their duty.’” These words are well quoted by Sir W. Hunter, for one’s thoughts dwelt on the heights of Jeytuck in Nepal, on the sea near the Cape of Good Hope, on Kittur Fort in Belgaum, and on the mountain pass near Bellary, where the mortal remains of Tom, William, St. John and Webb lay.

The only son of the Sylhet elephant-hunter who did not go to the East was Francis, in holy orders. A man of learning and sufficient means, he early retired to a Hertfordshire parish and spent his life among his books. The only daughter who remained at home was Charlotte, my grandmother, and it is with her fortunes that we have now to deal. In 1815, Webb, the Madras civilian, and Lieutenant Thomas of the Bengal Army, were no more, but the other brothers and sisters were making good their Indian careers. Her mother had died two years before, and it was uncertain what sort of life was before Charlotte when she met John Ritchie.

William Thackeray used to say that it was through Amelia Webb that the wits had come into the family. His daughter, Lady Ritchie, has given a charming account of a visit with her father to the house at Hadley Green, and his father’s remarks while visiting it. It forms the Biographical Introduction to vol. xiii, *Ballads and Miscellanies*, and should be consulted by those who desire to go further into these early happenings. The sons had gone out one by one to their Eastern careers. William was the most statesmanlike and intellectual. Richmond was the cleverest, the man of the world. Their striking portraits at once arrest attention. Emily Thackeray was the most brilliant of the sisters. Her description of the procession of the fleet of 400 boats which accompanied Lord Moira in his tour of 1814 is striking. She was the mother of Sir Richmond Shakespear and of Col. J. Dowdes-



RICHMOND THACKERAY, BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE, FATHER OF  
W. M. THACKERAY THE WRITER.





well Shakespear, who was sometimes believed in the family to have been the original of Colonel Newcome. Her daughter Augusta, who became Lady Low, I myself recollect as one of the gentlest and kindest of ladies, as was also Mrs. Irvine.

The modesty and retiringness of William Makepeace Thackeray, the elephant-catcher (to fix him with a descriptive word), are noticeable. He never talked at large of his old adventurous life, but was wholly absorbed in his Hadley work. He seems to have been the best of friends with his sons. Richmond Thackeray, writing home, wistfully pictures to himself his mother's "routs going on at Hadley as they were last winter," "and Pater digging with old Anthony" at the flower-beds.

## CHAPTER II

1827-36

EPSOM, ETON, BROXBOURNE

JOHN RITCHIE of Baltimore, merchant, father of William Ritchie, whose letters are herewith presented, was a Scotsman. He was the son of another John Ritchie, tenant farmer of Mill of Potterton, Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire. The elder John Ritchie of Mill of Potterton had married Elizabeth Duguid in 1753, and both were strong Presbyterians. Elizabeth Duguid's brother had founded a commercial establishment at Baltimore. It was to the Duguid house at Baltimore that John Ritchie, father of our letter-writer, was sent to make his fortune, which, with Scottish pertinacity, he seems to have thoroughly effected. After working at Baltimore he returned to London, early in life starting an office in Southampton Row for the Duguid firm of Baltimore.

In the year 1815, he met Charlotte Thackeray and married her. There is a family legend that he first saw his future wife in a stage coach (probably the daily coach between Hadley and London), and that she was wearing deep mourning for her father, just at the time when their Hadley home had broken up. Probably, however, he had other opportunities of making her acquaintance; but there is no reason to disturb the pleasing family tradition of the stage coach meeting.

They were married and settled happily in Southampton Row.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Charlotte Ritchie was then twenty-nine, while

<sup>1</sup> The rest of this Chapter and Chapters II, III, IV, V were written for her children by my sister, Blanche Warre Cornish, who has kindly permitted me to incorporate her reminiscences with my own.



CHARLOTTE RITCHIE



CHARLOTTE SARAH RITCHIE.



he was twenty-eight. A year after marriage, about 1816, some reverse in the Baltimore house took place; they were no longer rich, and her eldest child died. But a succession of children followed. William (the subject of this memoir) was born in 1817, Charlotte in 1820, Jane in 1822, John in 1825 and Emily in 1828. Hadley had all passed away, but there was now a home in Southampton Row, to which the Thackerays in India could send their children.

“ I recollect my Aunt Ritchie’s sweet face when I came to her as a child from India, for six and thirty years always so kind and loving and tender,” were W. M. Thackeray’s words.

A letter from Mrs. Irvine, niece of Mrs. Charlotte Ritchie, describes the Ritchies’ home in Southampton Row :

“ When my sister, Mrs. Crawford and I, came home from India as little girls, dear Aunt Ritchie was quite a mother to us, and to my brothers, Richmond and John Shakespear at school, and I don’t know what we should have done without her. She was the kindest of the kind, overflowing with the milk of human kindness, and gracious to everyone. Without her our childhood would have been dreary, for there was scarcely anyone else who could receive us in the holidays, and her elastic house was always ready to open its hospitable doors and take us all in. The house was truly Holiday Hall to us, and seemed, at those times, to be quite delivered up to us. I have walked down Southampton Row, looking, as I thought, on the house, but the number is changed. The lower part of the house was all taken up by Uncle Ritchie—John Ritchie’s Baltimore office. Then above were the drawing-room, and a long slip of a room, opening out of each other. At the back was a long strip of garden, in which flourished a fig-tree. William, the eldest boy, was just half a year younger than myself, and we were fast friends. Besides plays, my Aunt Ritchie used to give little dances, at which we greatly enjoyed ourselves.”

Years later, when they were both out in the world, in ■



letter to William Ritchie, Sir Richmond Shakespear describes the Southampton Row house thus :

“ William Thackeray often came to Aunt Ritchie’s : he was full of humour and cleverness, as you may suppose, and used to draw caricatures for us ; but we little dreamed then of the literary fame he was to acquire. He used also to act with us sometimes, and I remember him in a wig capitally got up as Dr. Pangloss.”

In a letter to Mrs. Charlotte Ritchie, William Makepeace Thackeray says : “ I think that Southampton Row was the only part of my youth that was decently cheerful. All the rest strikes me to have been as glum as an English Sunday.”

The Ritchies lived on in Southampton Row till 1830, when they went over and settled in Paris in the Place Vendôme. They returned, however, to London in 1839, and lived for three years in Albany Street, but returned, finally settled in Paris, in 1841. William, their eldest son, went to Eton and Cambridge, and spent part of his holidays at Broxbourne in Hertfordshire, the curacy of his mother’s brother, the Rev. Frank Thackeray, the scholar of the family, the author of the *Life of Chatham* (which had the honour of being reviewed by Macaulay), and *Researches into Britain under the Roman Emperors*. The rest of William’s holidays was spent at Paris or Boulogne or Dieppe.

It will be well to describe the Paris life of the family with which William was in close touch. Sometimes he became a little impatient of his family being settled abroad, but this was only the natural whim of an English public schoolboy.

Mrs. Charlotte Ritchie’s sunny temperament found its counterpart in the vivid streets of Paris. Louis Philippe had been placed in the Tuileries to the joy of all expanding bourgeois. Omnibuses were multiplied, cabs were called *milords*. The bourgeois Royalty was rapidly beautifying

its capital with excellent *savoir faire*, but the streets were still very narrow and without pavements. "Mon ruisseau de la Rue du Bac" ran down most streets, and they were ill-lighted. But, to make up for all deficiencies, Paris had its gardens. The houses, old and new, only bordered the streets. Behind them, low-walled gardens ensured sunlight, silence and trees. Many convents of the eighteenth century and ancient seigneurial hôtels offered the shade of immemorial trees to houses which had been built in these enclosures, and were let in apartments. The gardens prevailed everywhere, except in the Cité and in the centre where L'Hôtel de Ville and Les Halles flank each side of the ancient Rue St. Honoré. Add to the charm of verdure in Paris in summer, that of the scent of wood-smoke in the air in winter, and of the strips of blue sky between the tall houses, which you may still enjoy to-day in the clear air of Paris, and you can fancy it was possible to call an *appartement* "home."

Charlotte and Jane were confirmed according to the rite of L'Eglise réformée de Paris, and the teaching of the two great preachers Coquerel and Adolphe Monod fixed their religious faith. From 1842 to 1878, Charlotte was a member of French Protestant Committees and visited their *asiles* and homes. The sisters went to the school of Madame Martinez, ■ lady of old-fashioned ways, as day boarders. Charlotte left the school early, for her parents leant so much on her that everything was hers to do. "She managed house and affairs," wrote an old friend of hers, "and quite finished her own education. At the same time she was taking a mother's care of Emily, and shielded her own mother completely from all care and worry."

Charlotte and Jane were a complete contrast in looks and manners. Charlotte was fresh and rosy, Jane had a clear, dark complexion with soft brown eyes. Charlotte was never so happy as when buried in a book; Jane was always fond of society. Charlotte did not care for music, but Jane was always devoted to it.

When Charlotte was eighteen ■ great trial left its mark

on her. Smallpox seized on her with extreme violence, her life was despaired of, and for ten days she lay totally blind, so that it was feared, should she recover, her sight would be gone.

Not only looks, but health and eyesight were impaired by the cruel illness, though she makes light of these things in her letters. To judge by them, she was an amused spectator rather than a participator in the enjoyments which Jane was so much fitted for. She made herself mistress of German and Italian, and taught both to her young brother and sister.

The great sorrows which befell her later were to call out the deeply religious side of her nature which found its outlet in inexhaustible devotion to the poor and all who needed help. Work became her solace, and her tenderness towards suffering or infirmity sought out its objects and spared no fatigue or trouble to find them.

We now return to William Ritchie, and add a few notes before giving one of his mother's letters to him at his private school at Epsom, and some correspondence from Eton.

At the first school at Epsom, William Ritchie took a manly, serious view of the world, which seems to have been inspired by a school-fellow. His mother wrote to him what we should consider very grown-up letters, to which he took a pride in answering suitably. This correspondence shows the relations in which he stood to his parents.

The following are some "Maxims for a Public School," written on a card in a childish hand at the age of eleven :

1. Never fight, except in an honourable cause.
2. Accept my adversary's challenge when it is an honourable one.
3. Never run into debt.
4. While a fag, do all that I am told, except what is disgraceful.
5. Never grumble, nor waste away time.
6. Never tell tales.

*From his Mother to Master William Ritchie, care of  
Rev. J. A. Borson, Epsom.*

LONDON, May 3, 1828.

MY DEAREST WILLIAM,

I wrote you on Saturday, a few lines, with a parcel I sent you containing the Pilgrim's Progress and other books. I had the pleasure of receiving your note of April 30th. All your thoughts and feelings interest me, my beloved boy. I rejoice that you continue to improve and that you feel happier. Without confidence there can be no friendship and I am glad you have explained with your friend and found that you were mistaken in thinking him less partial to you than formerly.—Whilst I love to hear of your meditations and of your religious feelings, I regret that you say you do not relish out-of-doors amusements. Exercise in the open air is so conducive to health and contributes also to tranquillity of mind, for our minds and bodies are here so connected that one cannot suffer without affecting the other, and the Latin adage of *a sound mind in a sound body*, comprising the utmost happiness which we enjoy below, is perfectly just, for I think both the body and soul as created must have been perfect and though doubtless much degraded since the fall the Almighty has left us innumerable blessings and has given us reason to protect and guide us on our way, though without the hopes of everlasting life through the merits of the blessed Redeemer, a feeling mind could enjoy little happiness in a life when "the feeling for another's woe," "their feeling for his own" are perpetually liable to sorrow and when death is ever at hand to end the most fortunate of earthly existences. Petty annoyances which are always recurring, are very annoying to persons of irritable nerves. I have often observed that trifling misunderstandings create dissent between the best friends, openness and candour are the best companions through life. I have seen a very slight deviation from truth lead to great evils.

I agree with you as to the ineffable beauty of moonlight scenery; the poets have all attempted and sometimes succeeded in describing its sublime effect. The Psalmist beautifully says: "The heavens declare the glory of God," etc.



Your Uncle William<sup>1</sup> preferred Homer's description of moonlight to any other passage in poetry, and he had a fine taste. I regret I cannot recollect the passage or whence taken, but you will find it in the *Iliad*. Milton abounds in beautiful descriptions of evening and of the moon, but a much humbler bard says with truth :

"The dews of the evening most carefully shun,  
"Those tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

And it is more beneficial, I believe, to health to listen to the lark than to the nightingale. I admire much a few lines of "The Task,"—indeed there are very few lines in that sweet poet which I do not admire :

"Whom call we gay ? That triumph has been long  
"The boast of mere pretenders to the name.  
"The *innocent* are gay—the *lark* is gay  
"That dries his feathers, saturate with dew,  
"Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams  
"Of dayspring overshoot his humble nest.  
"The Peasant too, a witness of his song,  
"Himself a songster, is as gay ■ he," etc.

I hope you cultivate your garden. My poor father was very fond of gardening, and always found amusement and employment in his fields and gardens. He used to repeat with pleasure the lines relative to, I think, a Grecian who, when called on to resume some high employment in the state :

"Great Abdolonumus was labouring found  
"With his own hands in his own little ground."

I fear I don't spell his name properly. I scribble in great haste. Your sisters desire their best love in which your Aunt and Father unite with, dearest William,

Your affectionate mother,

C. S. RITCHIE.

Your Uncle Frank was here on Tuesday and asked much after you. He hopes you study Eton Grammar. I told you, I suppose, of Mrs. Henry Shakespear's arrival and that William Thackeray has gone into the country.

<sup>1</sup> William Thackeray, Madras Councillor, my father's eldest uncle.



William Ritchie was at Eton from 1829 to 1835, and boarded at Holt's, a Dame, the house with the gables fronting the school. His tutor was Mr. G. J. Dupuis, afterwards a Fellow of the College. All the fellows, especially Dr. Balston, remembered him most affectionately. Dr. Keate was Head Master, and Dr. Goodall, Provost. Keate had the school firmly in hand, though Lord Waterford was practising his famous practical jokes. William Ritchie, who was in the boats at Eton, used to tell his Eton stories with excellent mimicry and intense enjoyment. Amongst others was the following :

There was danger, during a cold and rainy season, owing to the river being unusually high. Dr. Keate threatened Boats with punishment, and hearing that the boys persisted in practising for races, after many warnings went down the river to receive the offenders on the bank and take their names. The "Six" was reported up the river; the crew were rowing with caps over their faces to elude watchful masters. "*Silly boys ! We know you all the same !*" was the famous word of Coleridge, the master, roared across the river. The crew rowed up to Surley, two miles up the river, and back again. Then came the climax of the story, as we heard it. Keate, in three-cornered hat, gown, cassock and bands—which he always wore—stood on the bank fuming with rage. The six-oar came nearer and nearer. Sure enough their caps were over their faces, and then they showed their features. They were seven water-men, or "cads" from the Boats, hired by Lord Waterford for the *ruse*. It had been most successful. Dr. Keate walked home, without a word, but took an early opportunity of flogging Lord Waterford.

Lord Waterford stole the block in 1836. He entered Eton in 1826, so that he was high in the school above William Ritchie, and left long before his days of rowing in the school in the "Sixes" as the Boats came under the cognisance of the Masters. In those robust days the boys managed their own athletics.

No doubt in the "Thirties" the river was a great delight to William Ritchie. Solitary, and free as air, a boy could get round "Rushes" "after twelve," even on a whole school day, but on a half-holiday, after the enforced "three o'clock" chapel, he could run to the Boat Shed he patronised, to get off to Monkey Island and back before "lock-up." Surley Hall is described as "A hostel on the river," where "boys could order beer, and lounge till 'Oars' was called by the Senior Captain of a six-oar, and there was a rush to the boats."

#### LETTERS, 1828-1835

##### *To his Mother from Eton, aged 11*

ETON COLLEGE, *September 21, 1828.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . I am getting settled now and am pretty comfortable though not as yet perfectly so. I will now give you an account of the place. I was examined and placed as you know on Saturday. I will give you a description now of the College. There is round it a low wall from 3 to 4 feet high where there are several stalls (?). You enter the College by an archway and get into a spacious court in the middle of which is a statue of the founder, Henry 6th. Immediately opposite you are the apartments of the provost under which there is an archway, which leads into another court where is the library. On the right side of you is the Chapel, a noble building in the Gothic style, the principal part of the College generally drawn for the College itself. We go there twice on holidays, on Saints' days and Sundays, and once on half-holidays (Thursdays and Saturdays). On the left of you is the lower school, where I go in, the collegers' rooms, etc. etc., and above you is the Upper Schoolroom. There is an archway passing between the lower school and the Collegers' rooms, which leads you into the playing fields, a beautiful large piece of ground, with very fine old trees, whence you have a good view of the Chapel, Windsor Castle, etc. The Thames runs through it.

I have not experienced much fagging yet; though all the 5th and 6th form can fag for you. I do not yet know who will be my master. Give my love to my sisters, my aunt

and my father. I am very sorry that he has not been well and I am anxiously waiting for his arrival. I have not seen young Rodd yet ; I am afraid I shall hardly know him by sight, though I think I saw the Rodds' carriage the other day. Young Thackeray is here. I have been very much disappointed in being placed so low, but I will make up my mind to do all my lessons as well as I can, though I am afraid I have not much chance of King's. I am getting very fond of Eton now. I have made several friends. It is a very beautiful place. I have not (as you observed) answered Doxat's letter, but I will as soon as I have time. I have no such friend as you and my father in the world !

I remain,

Your affectionate and dutiful son,

W. RITCHIE.

*From W. Ritchie at Eton, aged 15*

ETON COLLEGE, *February 23, 1832.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . We have now a great deal of talk about the Cholera, and I am afraid it has reached London ; I have very little apprehensions of its attacking us, for the masters, dames, etc., are taking the greatest precautions against it ; I have not the least fear about it (and they say that agitation is sure to bring it on), but I am very glad that you are safe on the other side of the water ; my greatest apprehension is that I shall either be subjected to a rigorous quarantine at Boulogne, or shall lose the pleasure of seeing you at all at Easter, which would be a worse misfortune than any other the cholera is likely to bring upon us.

Did I tell you that Dupuis has received another living, I understand, worth £500 a year, from the Vice-Provost of Eton (not of King's), as he has just married one of that worthy Dignitary's daughters ? He is a lucky man.—I have had a great deal of amusement lately by following the King's Harriers on foot, which meet near us, and what a glorious exercise the chase must be when on horseback. *When I am a man*, as far as I can afford, I hope to enjoy that glorious amusement ; and I think if I had £5,000 a year I would make fox-hunting my favourite amusement in preference to shooting or anything else ; the excitement of the chase seems to be approaching to that of war, and must be most delightful.

*To his Mother*

ETON COLLEGE, May 14, 1834.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . I, however, have quite lost all pleasure in boating, &c., and begin for the first time, I think, to feel a total change in tastes, likings, &c. I feel, in fact, however much you may laugh at it, that I am staying too long at Eton, that I am no longer a boy in age, but in feelings, tastes, &c. &c., and this is a thing my father does not seem to comprehend, or I should not now be at Eton. It is only just now that this feeling opens upon me, & I do not feel it yet at its full force; the reason is this, that nearly all my old friends, those who had any kind of fellow-feeling with me, are now at college, or at all events not here, and I, with an immense number of lately formed acquaintance, have very few friends in this place. Next term I should have none, so that it is high time that I should leave. I wanted, and my tutor wanted me, to go down to Oxford to-day to see if I could get matriculated, though I had but a poor chance of it, but Keate would not allow it, without a letter from the head of my College. . . .

*To his Mother. Written after leaving Eton and before going up to Cambridge.*

BROXBOURNE, June 26, 1835.

You will be surprised to hear that I look back with very little regret to Paris; I think I should have enjoyed myself *with you* better elsewhere; Paris is a place which makes one care only for oneself and one gets so dreadfully egotistical there that I fear that while there I added but little to the comfort of all of you, being so totally wrapped up in self; but certainly in the country with fine fresh air and comfort, one's energies become much stronger, one is always in good spirits, one is no longer cramped down as in Paris and I seem to feel myself quite a different being. Pray excuse all this nonsense, which is caused by my anxiety for you to leave Paris.<sup>1</sup>

Many thanks to you for the verses on Hadley, which are

<sup>1</sup> The weather had been very hot in Paris. This letter is written in a mood of enthusiasm for English country in summer; but my father was always loyal to France.



full of feeling and very beautiful. My uncle and aunt<sup>1</sup> were very much affected with them and thought them most touching and true. How glad I am that I saw the spot where you were brought up ; I can assure you I thought I recognised every place you had described to me and felt very much what you have said in those verses ; neither I nor my poor sisters will have any local recollections of the same kind. I do not think even your poetical talent could find a line for any habitations in which we have dwelt ; we have never been able to enjoy ourselves together in any lively sports nor give a vent to our exuberant spirits in common ; it is most astonishing what the possession of a single field does towards the happiness of a family who love each other and towards the recollections they will have afterwards.

*From W. M. Thackeray*

*September 1835.*

MY DEAR WILLIAM,

. . . I suppose you go *up* in October.—I would write you some very delightful moral sentiments on the occasion only you see that I am in such a state of mental exhaustion that it is impossible to form connected sentences, much more to pour into your astonished ear the sound & sonorous moralities wh. are likely to have an influence on yr. heart,—only, my dear Fellow, in the name of the Saints, of your Mother, or of your amiable family, & the unfortunate cousin who writes this—keep yourself out of DEBT—and to do this you must avoid the dinner parties & the rowing (boating) men.—However, you will see John Kemble, who (particularly when he is drunk) will give you the finest advice on these & other moral & religious points.

I look forward with a good deal of pleasure to my trip—I am sure it wd. do you much more good to come with me, than you can get from all the universities in Christendom. I propose going from Munich to Venice by what I hear is the most magnificent road in the world—then from Venice, if I can effect the thing, I will pass over for a week or so into Turkey—just to be able to say, in a book wh. I am going to make, that I have been there—after wh. I will go to Rome—Naples, Florence, &c., and if possible pay a visit to dear Mr. Langslow ; who, considering all things,

<sup>1</sup> The Revd. Francis and Mrs. Thackeray.

will, I am sure, be charmed to see me—then I will go to England, book in hand, I will get three hundred guineas for my book—then I will exhibit at the Water Colour Society, and sell my ten drawings forthwith. . . .

You recollect the picture of Jeannette on the Boulevards—as likewise the one of Alnaschar in the A. Nights. If you don't Johnny will tell it you—give my love to him, & my aunt & everybody—I am going to write to Frank (for whom I have bought a plan of the battle of Wynendael) so I need not impart to you any of the affectionate remarks, wh. I intend making him. God bless you, my dear William. I will write to you sometimes on my travels, and when I am settled my wife will always be happy to see you at tea.

Your loving Cousin,

W. M. THACKERAY.

1, RUE DES BEAUX ARTS,  
FBG. ST. GN.



## CHAPTER III

1836-42

CAMBRIDGE AND LONDON

### INTRODUCTORY

FROM Eton, William Ritchie passed, after an interval of study at Broxbourne, to Trinity College, Cambridge. He was there from 1836 to 1839. It was here that he got an appellation, which was alluded to by his friend, Tom Taylor, in the *Spectator*. "Few Trinity men of twenty years' standing but will remember 'Gentleman Ritchie' as one of the most amiable and popular men of his time, and so conspicuous for his courtesy, and an almost overstrained punctilio of social propriety, manners and deportment, as to have earned the above nickname, given half in playfulness, half in compliment. Men of his standing will remember the true story of the tall and stately, but gentle undergraduate, who once compelled a proctor to make him an apology for doubting his word when stopped in Trumpington Street ungowned, or after canonical hours, roughly questioned, and his explanation made light of by that official functionary. To have forced a proctor to apologise was felt by the whole undergraduate world as a triumph which nothing would have effected short of the chivalrous determination, unsullied character, and scrupulous courtesy of 'Gentleman Ritchie.' What he was as an undergraduate, he continued through his professional and official life—the gentlest and most unstained of men—always helpful to tenderness, and liberal to profusion, making fewer enemies, even in the irritable, scandal-loving and

sectional society of Calcutta, than any man who has ever filled so prominent a position there."

William Ritchie was a strong swimmer; he saved four lives from drowning. He rescued one French gentleman bathing at Boulogne, and three undergraduates at the Paper Mill ferry on a cold December day.

*To his Mother, Mrs. Ritchie, Dieppe*

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, October 25, 1835.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . It was a great pleasure to me to have seen my Father, who was looking excessively well, before I embarked on my new career, & I arrived here for the first time with very pleasing anticipations & under very good auspices, the kind wishes of my friends. These anticipations have been quite realised as far as comfort is concerned. I have very nice rooms, very good friends, & all the accessories of comfort, and begin to feel fond of the studies of the place. I do not think the aspect of Cambridge fills one with that veneration one presupposes: the town is such a vile one & speaks such shame of the inhabitants of the place, who seem never to have made an endeavour to *relever* the beautiful colleges by the assistance of a single decent street, the country round is so flat & uninteresting, and so different from the general cheerful aspect of Hertfordshire, that it requires all the associations attached to these walls, all the veneration one feels for those who have dwelt in them, to get rid of the disagreeable impressions, so matter of fact & incongruous to the dignity of the University, and to feel their beauties to their real extent. How magnificent, however, is King's! It certainly is the most noble Institution, in point of exterior, to be imagined, what pity it is that the inmates should not feel this more. A King's man scarcely ever distinguishes himself in the University. Our college, though not so regularly beautiful as King's, is much more interesting in associations than any other, and I feel quite proud of being enrolled a member of an institution to which a Newton & nearly all the great men of our country have belonged, & have in some measure owed their first steps

to Greatness. I am sorry to say that I do not expect to do anything of a distinguished nature here : I have read a great deal, & intend to work as hard as possible ; but here they require such close reasoning in everything, & expect you to *approfondir* so thoroughly the beginning of everything (which is by far the most tedious part), that it requires the strongest memory & clearest calculation to reap much advantage in these studies. However, Classics, which I am very fond of, are in very high repute at Trinity, and I must do my best towards mastering the Mathematics.

Our relations here have been very kind, asking me to tea. I went to the Prymes, and Frederick Thackeray's once, and have since had invitations from them, which I have refused. The Provost of King's<sup>1</sup> has been absent for some time, but has now returned. I have not yet called, but mean to do so to-morrow. I understand he scarcely ever admits an Undergraduate into his house, and shall be glad to get over this *visite de cérémonie*. At Cambridge, the less you have to do as a Student, with Dons, which is the expressive term for all heads of colleges, fellows, &c., &c., &c., the better : they either overwhelm you with boring civilities, or treat you in the most contemptuous manner. . . .

*To his Mother, Mrs. Ritchie, Rue de la Ferme des  
Mathurins, Paris*

CAMBRIDGE, December 12, 1835.

BROXBOURNE, December 18, 1835.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . I trust to receive you down here one of these days, & do the Honours of the 'Versity to you all. This last fortnight has somehow or other been rather an idle one with me : I have been dissipated enough to go to the County Ball here (a Ball being now an End in one's existence) & enjoyed it very much. We had Weippart's Band, & as much beauty as this Seat of Learning (more famous for Black Gowns than pretty faces) could afford. I was invited the next night by a Mrs. Frere to a gay party

<sup>1</sup> Dr. George Thackeray.

she gave at Downing Coll. (of which Dr. Frere is Master), & was much amused at some Charades, or Shérades (the Orthography of this fashionable word is too much for me) which were performed. I daresay you have seen something of this kind. It is a kind of riddle, which is *acted*, instead of written or read, being a word as Gypsey, for instance, which is taken to pieces. The first syllable *Gyp* (I believe I explained the full meaning of this term before) is represented by a scene between a Gyp & a Bedmaker, which was excellent: the end, *sey*, was converted to *sigh*, & a Lover, sighing like a furnace, was introduced (which was very bad), and the Gypsey scene, in which the prettiest Girl in Cambridge figured in Gypsey Costume, & a beautiful Song was sung, was most romantic. You will be surprised I daresay by this long detail, to find to what lengths of gaiety the wife of a "Don" may go; but greater wonders than this are to be met in Cambridge.—I was at a very nice Dance some time since at the Doctor's (Fred. Thackeray's), & these with two tea-parties at the Prymes complete my "*entrée dans le monde*" of this term: I do not think I shall go much into society here (I mean only *en ville*), though kindly received; but shall always keep up what acquaintance I feel pleasing & willing to be kind, in the town. . . .

. . . . .

The Paris life continued happily, but we may anticipate matters and pass on to the calamity of 1842.

Mr. Ritchie had accompanied his two sons to see the ship sail for India in September 1842. The three daughters were left with their mother in Paris, and their thoughts were all with the travellers, when suddenly, in a day, a strange sore throat seized Emily, then fourteen, the idol of the house. When danger came she was delirious, and cried out, "The ship! The ship!" Charlotte rushed into her room, and Emily did not know her. All was over in three days. When Mr. John Ritchie returned from Portsmouth, having had no news even of the illness, he was overwhelmed with grief.

Work became Charlotte's solace, and her tenderness for

suffering or infirmity sought out its objects and spared no fatigue or trouble to find them.

In 1836, W. M. Thackeray's marriage took place in the Embassy Chapel in Paris, when he was twenty-five. Mrs. Thackeray was the daughter of Colonel Shawe, who had been military secretary in India to Lord Wellesley. There are many bits in *Philip* recording the beginnings of married life in a very thankful spirit. "Poor as he was, this was his happiest time. A young child, a young wife, a young husband watching both : I recall the group, and see something sacred in the homely figures. Over the sleeping infant and the happy mother the father looks with pride and thanks in his eyes. Happiness and gratitude fill his simple heart, and he prays involuntarily to the Giver of good that he may have strength to do his duty as father, husband ; that he may be enabled to keep want and care from those dear innocent beings ; that he may defend them, befriend them, leave them a good name."

It was in Paris in 1838 that he wrote to his mother ■■ follows :

"Here we have been two years married and not a single unhappy day. Oh ! I do bless God for all this happiness which He has given me. . . . I think happiness is as good as prayers, and I feel in my heart a kind of overflowing thanksgiving which is quite too great to describe in writing."

The following letter was written soon after the marriage. Mrs. Ritchie had invited the newly married pair to stay with her at Les Thernes in Paris. All the family were charmed with Mrs. Thackeray.

*From W. M. Thackeray*

18 ALBION STREET, *Sunday, April 30, 1837.*

Since our arrival in London I have been so busy as not to have a moment for writing, and saying that we have not forgotten our friends at Thernes ; my wife has not



much to do to be sure, but she is very lazy—we are looking out for a little Thackeray in a month. William has been to see us. My Lady Rodd was good enough to say that, she regretted exceedingly when I could not come to dinner *when asked last year*. She does not seem at all disposed to repeat the experiment. The Provost's daughter came suddenly to see us, and invited us to a grand repast. These are the only gaieties of which I have been guilty since we came to London—for most of my hours are spent in Fleet Street, in the cause of the *Constitutional*. With love to my Aunt and cousins, believe me, my dear Mrs. Ritchie,

Most truly yours,

W. M. T.

. . . . .

On leaving Cambridge early in 1839 William went to live with his family in Albany Street while reading for the Bar. Sir John Mowbray (member for Oxford 1869–93) read with William Ritchie, and describes their life in chambers, to which William had gone on leaving Cambridge, as follows:

June 11, 1879.

Many of the party besides your excellent father are gone. Among them I may mention Mr. J. C. Templar (afterwards a Master in the Court of the Exchequer), Mr. Henry Erskine (son of the Judge and grandson of the Lord Chancellor), and Mr. Mowbray Morris (for many years manager of the *Times*). Among the survivors are Viscount Cranbrook, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Joseph Arnould, afterwards an Indian Judge, and myself.

Our tutor, Mr. Hugh Hill (often called Hugu Hill from his enormous height and bulk), afterwards a Judge in the Court of Common Pleas, was then a special pleader of great eminence and large practice. He was a profound lawyer, but not a speaker, very industrious, high-minded and conscientious, in politics a moderate Conservative, in his religious proclivities rather a puritan of the North of Ireland type, of which he was a native. He made an excellent Judge, but shortened his life by his overwork in chambers.

The party in the Pupil-room was always very friendly,



full of life and fun, and industrious beyond the average. Many of us had been old acquaintances at school or college. Your father and Templer had been at Trinity College, Cambridge, together. Templer and I had been next to each other in the school at Westminster. Your father, Northcote and Erskine had been at Eton together. Northcote, Gathorne Hardy, Arnould and I had been friends and contemporaries at Oxford. We formed, therefore, as it were a party of old friends and gave a character to the Pupil-room. We were also industrious and ready to profit by the advantages afforded in chambers. During twelve weeks in the year Mr. Hill (always busy) was pre-eminently so. During the spring and summer circuit cases came in from all parts of the kingdom to be tried at the various Assises, and Mr. Hill drew the pleadings and advised on the evidence. He was generally at his chambers soon after ten, and frequently never quitted them (except to argue a case before a Judge in chambers), during five nights in the week until after midnight. Many of us spent a long day there—dining at one of the taverns in Fleet Street—returning after dinner and remaining until 12 o'clock. Two or three incidents may serve to show you the sort of boyish fun in which we sometimes indulged. I recollect well on the 29th of May, 1840, Northcote and I decorated the walls with sundry devices and mottoes, a crown, a mitre, "The king shall have his own again," *astræa redux*, etc. etc., and then invited Hill to come in and see the transformation of the Pupil-room. He was horror-struck at the unprofessional aspect of the whole place, and evidently had no sympathy with the Toryism of Charles I, or Laud or Strafford.

On another occasion we drew up a most elaborate case in which your father was to be the Defendant in a Breach of Promise Marriage Case. He came in, plunged into the papers, became abstracted in them, read a series of letters alleged to be his own love-letters, and remained unsuspecting till the end, where we disclosed the name. And I well remember his joyous laugh and hearty enjoyment of the joke, and his turning round and charging me with the concoction of the document.

On another occasion we contrived to abstract Erskine's coat, and sold it to a poor old-clothes man who was outside in the Temple.

One great characteristic of all our intercourse was, we never took offence at anything. Practical jokes were tolerated with the greatest good-humour and always enjoyed. No one, I am sure, contributed more to the hilarity of the party than your father. He was always in good spirits, always kind-hearted, always ready to enjoy and to impart fun. After chambers, our time was spent in different ways. Your father and Northcote and Erskine had their families in town. Gathorne Hardy was already married and was the father of one son. Templer lived at Greenwich. I was in lodgings and frequented the Oxford and Cambridge Club. We, therefore, rarely met in the evenings. But in the summer we made many a pleasant party to Richmond, or sometimes took long country walks and visited Templer at Greenwich. Your father, Erskine, Hardy, Northcote and I were members of a Private Debating Society, "The Vernon," which met about once a fortnight at the British Hotel, Cockspur Street. In January 1841, Hill, who had practised as a Special Pleader under the Bar, was called to the Bar, and ceased to take pupils. We all gave him a dinner (I think at the Freemason's Tavern), and he entertained us in return.

This was probably the last occasion on which we all met. It was January 30, 1841. I recollect it well, for it was the anniversary of the death of King Charles I, and Hill shocked some of us (most unwittingly) by having a calf's head on the table.

I can assure you that I always look back with unalloyed pleasure on the happy intercourse we had for some two years, that I prize the recollection of his friendship and of the good influences which he always threw over our circle.

In November 1841, a crash came in the affairs of the Baltimore Bank, and John Ritchie's affairs looked very black. A bank failed, of which he was the director. William became the trusted adviser and intermediary for his father in all this intensely harassing affair. Things were so bad that at one time William suggested that, in view of the possible action on the part of an unreasonable creditor, it might be advisable for the family to live for a while at Fontainebleau or St. Germain rather than in

Paris. It became necessary to leave London and live abroad as economically as possible. William thought it was not fair, in these circumstances, to expect his father to maintain him at the English Bar while he was waiting for briefs. Although his prospects were of the fairest, with his good start, his many friends, his great powers of intellect and of application, he formed the resolution of seeking his fortunes at the Indian Bar, conscious as he was of how much he was sacrificing thereby, and what a blow it would be to his family to be thus deprived of his society and support. He determined to earn a fixed income of £500 a year for his family as soon as possible.

It was about this time that William met Augusta Trimmer at Boulogne. At the suggestion of Mowbray Morris (an old fellow pupil at Hugh Hill's), William called upon her, and renewed the acquaintance in England, meeting her at Richmond and Windsor; and at balls in December 1839, at the Queen's marriage festivities, they discovered the state of each other's hearts.

Augusta Trimmer was one of two sisters, she golden-haired, and Blanche raven-locked, both musicians, singing and playing together with great charm. They lived with their mother, Mrs. Trimmer, widow of Commander Trimmer, R.N. They were enjoying London in a small house with windows overlooking the Park in what is now Hyde Park Place. In their mutual circle were two brilliant men about town. One was Mowbray Morris, one of the handsomest men of his time. The other was Charles Kean, an Etonian but senior to William Ritchie. The Trimmers saw Mr. Kean play Hamlet eleven times.

William Ritchie proposed to Augusta Trimmer at Garthewen in Denbighshire on August 28, 1842. No formal engagement was made, but from that moment they both treated their social relations as those of an engaged pair. On September 1, 1842, the *Prince of Wales* sailed from Portsmouth by the Cape route with William and Ensign John Ritchie on board, bound for India.

It added to the sorrow of parting with these two much-

loved sons that the Ritchie's youngest daughter died suddenly within a fortnight of the leave-taking.

Probably no young man sailed for the East in a more enterprising spirit than William. He had said good-bye to his family in Paris for an indefinite period. He had just proposed and been accepted. He was giving up hosts of friends and what promised to be a great career at the English Bar. He was setting his face to the unknown, determined to fight his way to secure in a reasonably short time a competence for his family, and, when that was achieved, money enough to marry. In point of fact, he was to return to England twice only, once for a summer's holiday, and once for a few weeks' recreation. And though he died early (at the age of forty-four), he was to have a truly happy career. He was to be universally beloved and respected, maintaining the character of England by the priceless example of character in the service of our great Dependency. That is the secret and key to our administration in India.

#### LETTERS, 1836-42

##### *To his Mother*

BROXBOURNE, *January 6, 1836.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,

. . . I came down here on Saturday, and was immediately whirled off by my Uncle to a dinner party, three miles off, at a Mr. Johnson's of Cheshunt, which proved a pleasant one and found a quantity of invitations to me from the aristocracy of Hoddesdon and its environs, who it appears have set their hearts on 'witching the world with the gaiety of their circle. Would that I had the powers of Strachan to tell how many billets, written in blue, red, or green ink, have been penned by the hands of the *élégantes* of the neighbourhood; would that I had the enthusiasm of a Laisné to detail the impression which each note made upon my *cœur susceptible*: still more would that I had the legs of a St. Julien to do justice to them, for



dancing, I would have you know, is the amusement in vogue. I have no tidings of any kind to tell you, and almost fear that my epistle will prove what my conversation invariably is, a discourse on the weather, without which topic, life (here) would be a blank indeed. I return to Cambridge about the end of the month, and look forward to it without dismay: the country in the winter is very pleasant, but destitute of all excitement: *les jours se suivent et se ressemblent*, which they do equally at Cambridge in some measure, to be sure, but there, you know you have the merit of *resistance* in study; here, I think, the necessity rather quenches the ardour, which, however, is very odd reasoning, and merely my thought for the moment. I have found a very agreeable set of acquaintances at Cambridge, upon which, the whole comfort of one's residence there depends, and feel inclined to like it more and more. The Society of the place is divided as you know into the two classes of "Dons," as they are called, and Undergraduates, between whom there is necessarily but little intercourse, the one being a decided restraint upon the other. Among our Fellows, etc., there are a great many highly talented men, but not many resident, I should say, who give you the idea of particular urbanity of manner. Wordsworth,<sup>1</sup> our Master, is, I believe, a weak old man without much head, a most ultra Tory, and the most decided drawler I ever saw: he owes his fine appointment to patronage. Thorp,<sup>2</sup> my Tutor, is a good scholar and a good man, who assumes the finished gentleman and the *parfait ton*, but somehow or other, is not at all popular, not so much from any severity, as from his being what I cannot express more clearly than as—a *humbug*,—and gives you the idea of rather a hollow man, who is determined on all occasions to have something to say, and to attract notice. He is attentive and civil to his pupils, but we are very little connected with him, but with his two lecturers, one of whom, Martin, one of the finest Mathematicians we

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Wordsworth, brother of the poet, was Master of Trinity from 1820 to 1841. He was the father of Charles and Christopher, who became Bishops of St. Andrews and Lincoln respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Kinglake, in *Eothen*, speaking of the theory of the Cambridge mathematicians as to the site of the crossing of the Red Sea, says: "This notion is supposed to have been adopted by most of the Fellows of Trinity, but certainly not by Thorpe, who is one of the most amiable of their number."

have, is a delightful man, for whom I have a very great regard. There is at Cambridge a very strong party, who have obtained the name of Simeonites or abbrev. *Sims*, from Simeon, their first founder, who carry religious feelings to a most exclusive and, I think, extravagant excess, refusing to associate with men not of their own turn of thinking, and affecting the greatest purity of manners and contempt of the vanities of the world. Old Simeon<sup>1</sup> has the credit of founding this sect and is most zealous in making converts: and it is an extraordinary thing, that very many young men should assume this rigour externally at least, of living, very different from the unassuming piety which does not obtrude itself upon all occasions. I am afraid that hypocrisy, and a wish to be noticed, is in most cases the source of this; if so, it is the most disgusting exhibition one can imagine. We have, however, one man at Trinity, Mr. Carus, our Junior Dean, who would do honour to any sect, though he carries his ideas upon the subject almost to absurdity, sending round tract-like letters to the Undergraduates; yet he is such an excellent, charitable man, so mild and just, that he is a favourite even with the most dissipated who are under his surveillance. Perhaps the reason I like Cambridge so much is that I *do* enjoy myself in my hours of relaxation, and this enjoyment of pleasant society, Messrs. Simeon & Co. would knock on the head; tea and Bible parties, where you can hold communion on the health of your soul, is, according to their canting expressions, the only relaxation one should really enjoy from devotion & study! . . .

I trust that you have passed a "happy Christmas & merry New Year" as the form goes, undismayed by cold and frost, in Paris; and wish that I had been with you. I have, however, had a very pleasant time here, unruffled, certainly, with any very heart-stirring adventures, but passed very comfortably; the inside of the house is more cheerful than the open air: for the children are all in excellent health and spirits, and though Twelfth day is not in such honour here, as you kindly held it in Paris, I trust that my entrance into my twentieth year will have a due effect upon my line of conduct; I do feel one regret, I assure you, which is feeling *older* than one ought to at

<sup>1</sup> Charles Simeon (1759–1836), incumbent of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, and a former Vice-Provost of King's, was an influential evangelical leader.



nineteen, and of course, like a wise-acre, wish I was 17 again : whether the nice dance we had on that day, to which I look back with great pleasure, has an effect on this sage wish of mine, I know not ; but tell Charlotte the pleasure I had then, was much greater than anything I have now, so let her enjoy to the full the *fleur du jeune âge*, which she becomes so much in every way.

Frank has urged me with some excellent observations about Johnny, and his prospects, with which I most perfectly agree ; whatever his line be, his natural parts should be aided with a sound practical education differing from the desultory one which is the ruin of so many. If I did anything at Cambridge I might be of great use to him in putting him in the right way for that, and he might secure an independence there, by rightly directed exertion ; my mistake has been to have always been too fine a gentleman, with a too high opinion of my own abilities, and it is a mortifying thing now to find one is not such a clever fellow as one thought oneself. At Eton the idea of working for one's bread never entered one's mind, or that of one's teachers. But my idea of my brother is, that he has very good natural parts, that what he has done as yet is in his favour, indirectly however, as though his mind must be enlarged and opened by his seeing and understanding more than most boys of his age, yet the really useful knowledge he has is but small (I consider the former, however, at his age, the greater advantage). Now whatever his line may be, there is a kind of education which would prepare a boy best, equally for whatever he takes up afterwards ; I mean neither at Eton, a French, nor a private School Education, all of which are defective in some main point ; but there are schools in England which turn out the best men in every calling in life, such as Shrewsbury (Dr. Butler's), Rugby (Arnold's) : and are gentlemanlike and not very expensive at the same time. If Johnny was sent to such a school from 11 and a half to 14 and a half (about), he would be equally *à la portée* to any line, well prepared and strengthened in body and mind ; I shall then take my degree : if I do not fail, he could go on preparing till 19, then either at Trinity or a small college (where Fellow-ships are far easier) he might be sent according to his abilities : or again, if at that age, 14 & a half, an opening should occur as a Merchant, he would have had a

sound practical education, fitting him for it, and at the same time a gentlemanlike one, giving him a taste for literature, which he might resume at some period; his knowledge of French and quick perception will in everything be *most* useful to him.

Yours very affectionately,

WILLIAM RITCHIE.

In the next letter there is mention of his friend Savile, regarding whom Charlotte writes as follows :

"I always think that his conduct towards Mr. Savile was characteristic of his whole life. This young man had had his leg so painfully injured by an accident, while riding, that Sir B. Brodie, who was called down by his guardian in consultation, and all the Cambridge doctors agreed that amputation was necessary. The night before the operation the Surgeon found a change for the better and told my brother, who was watching by his friend, that he thought the leg might be saved. The guardian and all the other friends, however, declared it was madness, and that having had the advantage of Brodie's opinion it must be carried out. Dear William's entreaties obtained 24 hours' delay. He rushed up to Town (no railroad then), saw Brodie, who could not return, Sir Astley Cooper, who could not go himself to Cambridge but sent his nephew, Mr. Bransby Cooper, who declared the surgeon was right and the limb might be saved."

### *To Charlotte*

TRINITY COLLEGE, *January 6, 1837.*

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

. . . My Christmas would have been a very agreeable one even in deserted Cambridge had there not been a terrible gloom thrown over it by a dreadful accident of a friend,<sup>1</sup> whose horse rushed with him at a turn-pike gate, and who broke his leg in a dreadful manner: his limb, thank God, will be saved, but he has suffered cruelly for

<sup>1</sup> Savile.

a month when it happened, and nearly his only pleasure is to have me read to, and sit by him, so that much of my time has been taken up with this ; but now his spirits, which from long confinement in one position had sunk dreadfully low, seem rising again, and I am in great hopes he will recover, though slowly. I am longing to hear full accounts of all of you in Paris : it is such a time since I have heard.—Tell our dear Mother that I am sorry she did not get the letter about Belgium, not that it was worth reading, but it contained my impressions of the moment which were very pleasant ones : I was particularly struck with the sacred pictures of Rubens which were the most glorious things I had ever seen. 2 pictures in the Cathedral of Antwerp, the Descent & Elevation of the Cross, were most wonderful. The expression of grief in all the countenances, particularly in the Magdalen and one beautiful Virgin, was most striking. I was altogether delighted with Antwerp, which reminded me and would you, still more, of Henri Berthoud's stories : we saw the tomb and a beautiful picture of Elisabeth Brast, and his second wife. Brussels I liked much : the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville is the most picturesque I ever saw : every house spoke of the dominion of the haughty Spaniard, or the less romantic pedantry of the ensuing age which covered them with Latin inscriptions.—Ghent was a most curious old town, with an immense population, all of whom, I believe, we saw taking a Sunday walk by their Canal, all with countenances exactly similar, each expressing an innocent self-complacency, and a perfect horror of anything like a joke. We had altogether a delightful trip and I trust my Father's journey back was as pleasant—you will be surprised to hear that the young Lady, into whose praises I launched some time since, Miss Pryme,<sup>1</sup> is about to be married and that I and at least a dozen other bold cousins<sup>2</sup> look blank

<sup>1</sup> Alicia Pryme, Mrs. Bayne, was daughter of Mr. Richard Pryme, Fellow of Trinity, Barrister, and the first Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge. He was a Whig, and represented Cambridge in three Parliaments.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Richard Pryme married Jane Townley Thackeray, daughter of Doctor Thomas Thackeray, of Cambridge, and granddaughter of the Head Master of Harrow. She and my father were therefore first cousins, once removed. The Provost of King's, Doctor George Thackeray, son of Doctor Frederick Thackeray, of Windsor, stood in the same relationship to my father. Thus ten cousins were all great-grandchildren of the Head Master.

with despair at finding ourselves rejected. The happy man is a certain Dr. Bayne of Bury : we were all to have been introduced to him on Monday night, and on arriving I found the fair Alicia decked out as a bride in virgin white : the 12 cousins all assembled, but alas ! no Dr. Bayne—he had been blocked up by the snow on the turnpike road and was forced to return broken-hearted : he has since however arrived, but I have not yet made, though neatly prepared I have, my congratulatory speech. I had 3 or 4 very pleasant days at Uncle Frank's. Selina<sup>1</sup> was there : she has grown up such a nice girl, but I had a dreadful fright, for while riding with her, her poney ran away, and having unfortunately just gone blind of an eye, galloped with her into a great ditch about 3 miles from home—she was not, providentially, the least hurt, but sore from head to foot, and most luckily an angelic old gentleman passed by in a chaise, who dislodged his servant, and brought her home very fast, or she might have died from the cold. She did not suffer the least afterwards. —I will write again as soon as possible : tell our Mother and Jane, that I have so little time even for my studies till my poor friend gets better, that I have not been able to write but will soon. You will be sorry to hear that Webster<sup>2</sup> took leave of the University to-day, and is going to struggle in the deep waters of the bar. I wish him most anxiously success, there does not live ■ better-hearted fellow. . . . I have heard nothing of W. Thackeray and his wife : I trust that the "Constitutional" is getting on as prosperously as it ought—I saw the other day in a life of Goldsmith, the Poet, that under the name of the Public Ledger, it was a paper in which he wrote at one time at some very small pittance, even after he had acquired some celebrity. It was reckoned the oldest of the papers.

I wish that Jane would sometimes write me a few lines in French, perhaps, as I see very little of that language except in Mathematical books, and it does me good to read it. Tell my dear Mother I long to hear from her when she has half an hour to bestow upon me, I trust that Demmler<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Selina Shakespear, my father's first cousin.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Webster of Lincoln's Inn (1810–75) became ■ F.R.S. and ■ authority on Patent Law.

<sup>3</sup> John's Tutor.



is going on well.—Give my kindest love to my Father: tell him I find my moving into College would entail great additional expense now, as it is a great chance how much you get returned for the furniture, the outlay of which is very heavy; I should like to be in College, but still not unless I can do it economically. I have now no more room to say all I should wish, my dear Girl, on this my Birthday, and after so long a silence, and so must conclude. Give my kindest regards to all friends, and acquaintance, and especially to W. Thackeray.

Pray write soon, dear Charlotte, I wish we had had more gaiety together in Paris.

Believe me,

Your ever affectionate brother,

W. RITCHIE.

Ask my Father to give 10 francs to Sarah for to-day. My friend, poor fellow, feels better this evening. I was at a delightful ball at Col. Pemberton's sometime since in honour of his daughter's marriage to a Captain Campbell whom my father used to meet at the Mills'. I have had some very good skating on Mother Cam too; and have enjoyed myself very much.

### *To his Mother*

CAMBRIDGE, February 6, 1837.

We have had a very gay week at Cambridge lately, at the time of conferring degrees, and tell Charlotte that all my dulness and cares of the winter vanished before one of the most delightful balls I was ever at, which was given by our friends who took their degrees this time, and I can assure her that, though she gives us so poor a character for gallantry and gaiety, that I never saw a nicer ball even at Paris than this one; but I will not give her *des vains regrets* by telling her of the magnificent band of twelve, presided by Weippart Self, of the grandiose supper, or of the beautiful women who came, some from 30 miles, to blend the smile of beauty with the laurel wreath of science! . . .

My poor friend Savile is getting on very very slowly, but I think is improving imperceptibly. He has now been



upwards of 2 months without moving one hair's-breadth, but is very cheerful and has quite rallied in spirits since his Mother's arrival, who came, I think I told you, about 3 weeks ago from Devonshire. She is a most agreeable woman and I continue to like her extremely on knowing her better; I take her to walk every day with a very pretty little girl of 12, his sister. With all this, my poor studies have suffered cruelly and I fear I shall for the present be very much thrown back, but trust soon to pick up my lost ground. I have been looking forward with more pleasure than you can imagine to the time when my exertions should be unfettered, and my loss of time in pursuits I am really anxious to get on in has very much fretted me, but I am now very much more at liberty than before, yet have now two examinations in which I shall have the mortification of being beaten by men whom I might have surpassed. I forget whether I told you I had a beautiful book given me for a prize from the College, a Milton in 6 volumes. Tell my father that the only rooms that I could have taken with any advantage to my comfort were some that would have been very expensive to furnish. I should certainly much prefer being in College, but had I gone in now, it would have been attended with very great expense. At Easter I may be more fortunate in getting them.

*To his brother John*

CAMBRIDGE, February 6, 1837.

MON CHER JOHNNY,

Il me fait bien de la peine de ne pas t'avoir encore écrit, mais c'était seulement hier que j'ai reçu ta lettre qui m'a fait bien du plaisir, seulement j'ai été très inquiet en te pensant malade, mais j'espère que cela passera bientôt. Tu vois que je ne me suis pas laissé de la place pour t'écrire. Je te remercie, mon cher petit frère, de t'être souvenu de moi, et je t'assure que je pense bien souvent à toi et que je désire de tout mon cœur que tu seras toujours une consolation auprès de notre chère Mère, à qui il fera plus de plaisir à te voir un brave écolier et bon garçon, que de posséder tous les diamants de la couronne. Travaille bien, mon cher garçon, et tu seras le plus heureux des joyeux étudiants de cher Monsieur Demmler, à qui tu

auras la bonté de présenter mes souvenirs et bien du respect à Madame. Adieu, mon cher frère, embrasse Emilie pour moi, je t'écirai bientôt encore et ne sois pas mécontent de ce que ma lettre est si courte, et si mal écrite. Tu vois que tu écris mieux que moi le Français, et bientôt aussi j'espère que tu comprendras mieux le Latin. Je te verrai encore au mois de juin, mais écris-moi quand tu en auras le temps.

Ton frère très affectionné,

W. RITCHIE.

*To his Mother*

TRINITY COLLEGE, March 1837.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

An accident which might have been awful but which, thank God, I trust had no bad effects, happened here the day before yesterday as I was going down on foot to row on one of the race days. On passing at a little distance from one of the boat-houses, where there is a ferry consisting of a large raft with rails which is brought over by a chain, and where the river is broader than usual, I heard a great shout from the bank, and on running up in great haste, I saw at a glance that this ferry had upset by the breaking of the chain and that *some* of the men were getting out of the water : a man told me that at least six of them had not risen ; and it was like a frightful dream to see no one on the surface of the water, and to know that there were human beings drowning at the bottom of that black stream. I threw off my coat and jumped in in a moment on the impulse ; having swum half-way across, I was seized by the leg by someone beneath the water, and with great difficulty extricated myself from his grasp. When I got him his face was as black as ink, and in another half-minute he would have been dead. On getting him to shore I went in again and I was happy enough to get out two other men who were sinking together : and then I and another man dived under the raft to see if there was no one got beneath it. We had great difficulty in doing this from the rails, which were being inverted now beneath the water. I was obliged to give it up, and after that we passed the most anxious moments I ever knew in my life, in turning over the ferry, which some dozens of us had great difficulty in doing ; and, to our inexpressible joy, no one was

underneath. I was so much exhausted by the weight of my clothes and the intensity of the cold (it was the coldest day we have had) that I was obliged to be helped from the bank to a house near, where I found 4 men who had been got out quite senseless and all with faces distended as with strangulation. I soon changed my clothes, and have most surprisingly found no ill effects whatever from my ducking. Our poor companions, who had such a narrow escape, had doubtless, when they rose, been kept down by the ferry above their heads, and it was most providentially that we found them. They are now all recovering slowly. A report has gone about that one man is yet missing, but this I have every reason to believe is false. It speaks most dishonourably for the credit of an English mob, that nearly all the clothes I left behind me, going home, were stolen, as some hundreds had assembled afterwards, and in such an anxious moment no one would have expected it.

I find I have filled my letter with this account, and indeed have scarcely else to say, for, as you may suppose, my mind has since been full of it. Mrs. Savile, my poor friend's mother, is still here but goes on Tuesday, as he is getting on very well, though slowly. I have been a great deal with her and found her a delightful woman.

*To his Mother, 12, Rue d'Aguesseau, Paris*

*September 1837*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . There are numbers of admirable schools in England where Johnny can be educated on very cheap terms—that King's College in London is an excellent place, & I do trust you will think before sending him back to M. Demmler's. The Latin he learns there is worse than nothing—Greek, which he ought to have begun long ago, he has not begun; and if you knew not only the profit but the pleasure he is losing by this delay, you would be anxious to remedy it.—The education he would get here would fit him equally well for a merchant or any line that might open for him—German, History, everything he may learn with much greater advantage to his mind hereafter than he does now, except that sound course of learning

which ingrafted early in the mind is the key to open all the riches of literature and science, and also those more substantial good things which talent, if properly and early made use of, is sure to confer. This is such a critical moment with him that I am in great agitation to know what you will do. I experience myself how cruel a thing it is to have to accuse myself of throwing away by early negligence the independence I might even by this time almost, have made for myself, and anxiously pray that his talents may not now be mis-directed.

The following appreciation of my father at the end of his first year at Cambridge was written by his aunt, Mrs. Langslow, to her sister Charlotte. The Langslows had come to England on leave and Mrs. Langslow had been visiting Cambridge.

*From Mrs. Langslow to Mrs. Ritchie*

December 12, 1837.

I have delayed writing to you very long, tho' anxious to tell you about your son. He is certainly the most delightful being I ever met. So kind, so unpretending, while so handsome and witty. He has all the wit of William Thackeray without any effort. I never had an idea of such a young man. And his attentions and condescension to the dowdy old body who went down in such a shabby guise to Cambridge would have been pleasing to an elegant Duchess. . . .

*To his Sister Charlotte*

February 1838.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I saw yesterday a letter from Aunt Langslow to Robert, in which she says that by my Father's account you were recovering from the smallpox,<sup>1</sup> but that she thought it impossible, as you had had it before, and I await this moment in great anxiety to know the real account

<sup>1</sup> The news was too true.



of your illness, for illness, I fear from this you must have had, though your last kind letter to me, which I have hitherto so ungraciously neglected to answer, was written but a fortnight ago, so that I trust there has been nothing so serious in your attack as I at first feared there might be. I have written to my father to know about you, & hope most truly to hear to-morrow that you have had no serious illness. I should have reproached myself under any circumstances for my long and seemingly unkind silence, but now that I think you may have been pining in sickness, my dear sister, I detest and am ashamed of my apparent neglect more than you can think. I must again entreat forgiveness from your kind & generous disposition, & can assure you that I can with indignation, arising from a sense of virtue, repel the insinuation you make against me of not caring for your letters, which are always to me as charming and as grateful as I could wish, but that I know it impossible, my dreadful scrawl could be to you. . . .

I have had a most disagreeable and absurd feud with the highest officer (but one) in the University, viz. the Senior Proctor, a remarkably fierce little man, who insulted me most wantonly under the shield of his official capacity, before I last left Cambridge. I applied for redress and courted a public inquiry into the circumstances, which seemed to alarm him and he retreated. I went away and the fame of the transaction grew mighty in the land I had left behind me, and on a public occasion in the Senate House, he was hooted most ignominiously, and received with all tokens of public disgust. On my return he charged me with spreading a report that he had apologised to me, and expressed himself in terms very offensive to me. I again applied to the Vice-Chancellor for an enquiry, but found that the Proctor was in his office a perfect dictator, and that no one could prevent him from saying anything he pleased in the discharge of it, however false it might be. I pressed the matter as far as I could, and it has terminated, to my great satisfaction, by his writing a most Jesuitical letter in which, while he disclaims having acted wrongly, he acquits me of all intention to misrepresent, &c. The Prymes, Thackerays, and indeed all my friends, were very kind about it while it lasted. . . .



*To Charlotte*TRINITY COLLEGE, *August 28, 1838.*

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I trust that you have not all been in a state of alarm about the invaluable ticker which has so long lain silent, during this whole week : for I heard a few days ago from William that he had the timepiece and that the Ledgerman had been injured by my making myself uncomfortable by doubting for a moment of his honesty. William received the watch duly, but poor Mrs. Thackeray's illness had caused him to put off walking to Bond Street—but Major Smyth is going to Paris and will take the watch, ticking once more, with him. . . . Frank himself is, do not be surprised, coming to-morrow to spend a week with me.—Being monarchs of nearly all we survey in this (not 'orrible) place, I have got a nice set of rooms of a friend for him, and he is coming to consult the public libraries and revel among manuscripts for 6 days. Shortly after these have expired, the learned world may expect to be enlightened by some new light thrown upon the history of the House of Plantagenet—but this is only conjecture. I look with the greatest pleasure to his coming, and he is perhaps next to you the best friend I have in the world, and I think he will enjoy his stay here. What a difference there is between receiving a person of any literary taste and another, for I am convinced Frank will be amused, without the least exertion or trouble on my part, with the books he will find, whereas I might in vain toil to entertain a Strachan or a Rodd. I do not know why I pitch so ill-naturedly on James Rennell,<sup>1</sup> but William Thackeray has visited Lord and Lady Rodd, who said civil things of your humble servant, and “declared she would ask him to dinner to meet me—indeed she showed the most noble consistency in her conversation, having declared the same thing these 3 years.”—I am delighted to know that Robert Langslow is coming to Cambridge in October, but regret on many accounts his not coming to Trinity—the instruction and whole institution of our College being confessedly, sans vanity, on so much higher a scale here than at any other

<sup>1</sup> James Rennell Rodd, son of Lady Rodd. She was first cousin once removed to my father and W. M. T.

of our Colleges.—Young Pollock,<sup>1</sup> Sir Frederick's eldest son, who has left Cambridge and is studying for the bar, is now here for some weeks—he is very clever and his society very pleasing. I have several friends now here all of literary attainments and am indeed living in the most delightful way possible—my studies are still very pleasant—and it is most agreeable to be actively employed—as to the mind, at all events. . . .

*To his Sister Charlotte*

CAMBRIDGE, Sunday, January 27, 1839.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I received your most kind letter & congratulations on Friday amidst all the bustle of shifting my things from my rooms in college to lodgings, which alone prevented my writing directly according to your desire, & yesterday there was no post. First let me thank you for your kind sympathy about my place,<sup>2</sup> which did my vanity much good, as, though not a brilliant one in itself, I feel proud of having achieved it under existing circumstances, and next let me reassure you and my dearest Mother about my health, which I quite grieve to think has caused you so much uneasiness. When I first told you that I had been indisposed I had already mainly recovered from the only serious part, the ulceration of the throat, but was labouring under pains much more disagreeable and disquieting to the sensations, and had I been able to rest that week of the ex. and the succeeding time I should be now as well as I ever was in my life. It is wonderful, however, thank God, how little bad effect has been produced upon me by the aberration from the proper course. After the degrees came out, such a whirlpool of spirits did I find myself hurried away by, that for five or six days it was absolutely impossible for me to remain quiet, and it was in vain that I endeavoured to struggle

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir Frederick Pollock, Queen's Remembrancer, father of the present Sir Frederick.

<sup>2</sup> My father took the degree of Senior Optime in the mathematical Tripos of 1839. Below him he had 16 senior optimes, about 40 or 50 junior optimes, and about 30 others who got no honours.

with my inclination to merriment—no man in the strongest health could have enjoyed himself more than myself. Prudence has now returned: I am most comfortably established in my quiet lodgings, living with a friend of mine who has just taken his degree with me who is a delightful fellow, and with a very good nice landlady, and there is every prospect of my getting round very shortly. My wish is to stay up for about two months, and to attend the public lectures here, which, strangely enough, undergraduates usually sacrifice to the private, as the latter are more adapted to the examinations.

I must now tell you about our Ball which we have given to the ladies of this and the surrounding localities with great éclat. This has been rather a source of anxiety to me, as I was appointed one of the presiding Stewards for it, and being prevented from giving much time to the arrangements, and doubtful whether I could go myself, I was anxious it should go off well, and you will be delighted to hear that we had one of the nicest balls that can be imagined. How proud I should have been if my mother, yourself, and Jane could have been there, and how I envied every bachelor whose mother and sisters did grace to the ball. My spirits did not desert me on this occasion, and I had need of them, for I & Ld. John Manners<sup>1</sup> had to receive the company, which began to arrive soon after 9 and we danced till 6 in the morning. There was a great deal of beauty in the room which to enumerate would not interest. A Mrs. Farmer & a Miss Wood were about the handsomest persons there I think, and there was a very nice girl, Miss Murray, the sister of my friend, with whom I lodge, who looked very well. I envied him very much, I can assure you. You will be pleased to hear of our good management too for such raw givers of Balls: the first Ball of this kind cost £350 nearly; the second, £260 or more: & ours, the 3rd, which I really think the pleasantest of the three, cost £195. Our Supper was excellent, & you will be surprised at one of our arrangements—not being able to afford both ices & champagne, we sacrificed the former to the latter, not without due consultation of the wishes of such ladies as we could confer with, & we

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Duke of Rutland, M.P., a great friend of Disraeli's in early days; the "Buckhurst" of *Coningsby*, and a member of the Young England Party in Sir Robert Peel's Parliament, 1842-6.

had every reason to be glad at having done so. We had Weippart's band from London and the great man himself honoured us with his presence—(he is far more civil & obliging than you could expect from one so pampered). His music is delightful to dance to; there is one galoppe in which the band raise their voices in concert with the music, which has the most beautiful effect. . . .

*To Emily*

OAKLANDS, September 1840.

You may congratulate me as the luckiest fellow in the world, for everything has smiled upon me during my absence from home. At the conclusion of my delightful stay at Bath, on declaring my intention of making an expedition through part of Wales to Swansea and thence to Devonshire, everyone pronounced me insane to think of such a thing, as the weather, which had been very fine, had undergone a change and threatened a succession of storms, rain and other disagreeables. I have observed in our much calumniated English climate that, at times when most it threatens, the finest weather ensues, and in spite of all entreaties, I started in desperate rain from Bath to Bristol and Clifton. The next morning rose on the beautiful rocks of Clifton most lovely—and the four or five days that I took on foot to reach Swansea from Chepstow by Monmouth, Abergavenny, Merthyr, etc., etc., were most beautiful. I was enchanted with Welsh scenery and the Welsh people, as far as I saw them, and felt much regret at not being able to stay there longer. I reached the coast of Devon (Ilfracombe) at 6 on a rainy morning, and as the coach only went to Okehampton alternate days, was obliged to start at once. On arriving at Oaklands, I found all the family prepared to receive me, and received the most charming welcome from the most charming family in the world. Mrs. Savile herself has come back, and the time passes most delightfully. My lame friend is the only one of the family not here, he being at a curacy near Birmingham. As an agreeable surprise, I found my old Eton friend Albany, the eldest son and "the Squire," who had been for three years in Canada with his regiment the 7th Hussars, returned and



at home for a short time. He has suffered much, poor fellow, and had lost, in Canada, his hair from the heat, a finger from the cold. However, he has regained his good looks, and is the same fine fellow he ever was. There are seven sons and five daughters, the eldest of the latter 21, beautiful and charming.

. . . . .

We have excellent shooting, billiards, cricket and every amusement which a large happy family can afford. Mrs. Savile is in excellent health and most kind and hospitable to me.

I stay here till Friday next, when I go to Newton St. Cyres, the place of my old friend Quicke, and on the following Tuesday I think I shall start from there for London, where I hope on the same day to find you all in as good health as I am and trust to be. Tell Jane that I felt great anxiety about Madame Laffarge's<sup>1</sup> trial. During my journey, I used to feel great joy on reaching the inn in the evening to see in the paper the favourable turn it has been taking for her. I do not think there is anything in the evidence to convince a jury that Madame Laffarge's was the hand that administered the poison.

This is a most hospitable country, and if I accepted all the invitations I am likely to get, I should not be home till November, but my visit to Quicke's must be my last.

Écris-moi quand tu en auras le temps.  
Ton frère très affectionné,  
W. RITCHIE.

*To his Mother*

TEMPLE, January 4, 1842.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

You will, I am sure, be glad to hear that I have been involved in quite a round of gaiety, as a succession of kind and pleasant invitations have poured in upon me this Xmas—indeed to enumerate them would be long—but I will use a proper and aristocratic discretion and will select for you the most *distingués*. My great entertainment was a grand

<sup>1</sup> Madame Laffarge was ultimately convicted for poisoning her husband.



ball given by Sir Robert Stopford,<sup>1</sup> new Governor of Greenwich Hospital, to which his son was kind enough to invite me. It was one of the most charming I was ever at—there being every incident which could make a ball pleasant—fine rooms, grand band, handsome uniforms, pretty women, and, above all, the most kind and courteous welcome on the part of our entertainers. Sir Robert is a very fine, hale old man, most affable and yet dignified in manner and well fitted to be Ambassador at the highest Court in Europe.—Lady S. and her daughters, who are numerous and graceful, also give one the idea of the most amiable family in the world, so that altogether my enchantment was very great—it would, however, have been far greater could my dear Janey and Charlotte have been there to enjoy it. Yesterday I dined most agreeably with Mr. Thom at Turnham Green. There was a large family comprising, to my gratification, the great Sir Frederick. He was kind enough to offer to propose me as fit person, etc., to the Bench on my being called to the bar, which coming from the highest law officer who could do it was very amiable and flattering. He speaks in terms of the highest admiration of my kind master, Mr. Hill, and foretells judgeships and other great things as his certain reward. . . . Pray send the statement as soon as you possibly can by the Ambassador's bag. I fear young Howard is not in the Embassy now, or he would do it at once.

### *To Charlotte*

PUMP COURT, TEMPLE,  
Saturday, April 9, 1842.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

John has been with me for several days at Easter, but went back 10 days since. He is looking famously well and I trust getting on well with his learning. As I told you before, I trust these disastrous events in India will tend to expedite his cadetship—without at the same time increasing the risk which it involves, as (the first dreadful surprise over, and our troops upon the guard) no more is to be apprehended there than the ordinary chances of a soldier's life. I meant to send a *Times* containing the

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Stopford was a very distinguished naval officer, who took part in many actions during the French war.

mournful accounts received by the last Overland—but such is the interest here felt on the subject that, at two o'clock on the Tuesday the news appeared, not a single copy of the *Times* was to be had for love or money. I send you the *Britannia* by the post, which I regret to see contains but an imperfect account of these sad events. If I meet with a better I will send it. Sir Richmond is doubtless at this moment most actively employed—being, as you know, military secretary to General Pollock, the Commander of the forces sent to the relief of the English at Cabul near Jellalabad. They will doubtless succeed in their mission of rescue, but the fear is that it may arrive too late. The last dreadful massacre of the troops may in great measure be attributed to the vacillation of the Commander at Cabul, General Elphinstone, who, as tho' under the influence of some evil hallucination, continued to treat to the very last moment with wretches who know no law but that of deceit and murder. His age and infirmities, coupled with previous services, are the only palliation for the fearful responsibility of having not only sacrificed many thousand lives, but disgraced the British name for valour and constancy under misfortune. . . .

Does the Income Tax form the great topic of discussion among the British at Paris, as here? It is a bolder measure than Sir Robert Peel ever obtained credit for—and will doubtless, for the Government, be the best possible tax. But its inequality must ever prevent it from being a just one.

### *To his Mother*

TEMPLE, April 23, 1842.

. . . I saw Dr. Thackeray<sup>1</sup> and his family, who are all well—he still looks the fine, hale and manly old man he used, and was very hearty in his welcome. . . .

I have received a most kind letter from Major Irvine<sup>2</sup> in reply to one I wrote from Boulogne asking advice touching India. He considers that a fine field is there open for an

<sup>1</sup> Dr. George Thackeray, Provost of King's.

<sup>2</sup> The husband of Marianne Shakespear, my father's first cousin, of whom there is so much in the early Indian letters.

industrious man, and most kindly offers me, in the event of my going out, a home at his house. At all events, it is well to have so good a friend in reserve in case of failure elsewhere.

You have read the disastrous accounts from Afghanistan, a part of India to which the British arms had not extended till within the last 3 or 4 years, and which it would have been happy if they had never visited, altho' their advance there was hailed with triumph here. Poor Sir W. Macnaghten's fate was very dreadful, but it seems very certain that no such gloomy presages as have been drawn for the future are at all justified, inasmuch as our disasters hitherto have been occasioned by the suddenness and surprise of the attack alone, and this once over, all our measures will ensure as great safety to our troops as any warfare can admit of.

I had a kind note from Sir Richmond the other day, dated Calcutta. It gave no news, however, save that he was starting on a trip to Ludhiana some 2,000 miles up the country, and for the next fourteen days should be incessantly shut up in a palkee, jolted and worried to death. From McCulloch's map, I see Ludhiana is on the way from Calcutta too, and not very far east of the seat of the war, being near Lahore, probably 200 miles or so east of Peshawur, where doubtless he was to join the army to which he is Military Secretary. From Peshawur (which is in the Punjab, a friendly country) the mountain passes commence which lead into Afghanistan. The two principal are the Bolan Pass, being the southernmost one, and that in which, two years ago, our conquering army poured themselves into this terrible country almost without resistance from the natives, who did not make their stand until the army had disengaged itself from the mountains and sat down before Ghuznee, where after a desperate resistance British discipline carried the day. The northernmost pass is called the Khyber, which leads to Jellalabad (where the heroic Sale is now hemmed in with an army not near one half as large as that which perished in its retreat from Cabul) and through this pass Pollock's fine army with Richmond have probably at this moment fought their way to the assistance of Sale. Pray heaven they do not arrive too late to rescue his small but determined band. If in time, it will go far to retrieve the British name, and by

inspiring a salutary terror, check the further spreading of this dreadful insurrection.

You will see, by a paper I send, a letter from Lady Sale, of which the Duke of Wellington has said that he himself never wrote a better despatch. The poor ladies in captivity appear to be well treated, and doubtless the wily Afghans will spare them with a view to disarm our avenging armies.

This is a dreadful digression from our dear Richmond. With his note, he sent his journal revised, but, I am sorry to say, not continued to a later point than that at which it ceased when we saw it last. He wishes me to get it published<sup>1</sup> and out of the proceeds buy a memorial of him. On a second perusal, I find it most interesting. I am in communication with Blackwood (to whom I got an introduction from Warren, known as the author of *Ten Thousand a Year*), as to its publication in his magazine. . . . Give my most affectionate love to the dear girls—let not Félicie be forgotten in them, who I hope is quite well.

Ever yours, dearest Mother,

W. R.

### *To John*

*April (?) 1842.*

I grant that it is a trying thing to you not to have the money to purchase certain indulgences which others do. But see what is your reward for resisting the temptation and how much the hardship is counterbalanced by the feeling that you have done your duty to your family. Here is your father (a man more generous never existed) who, after a long life of benefits to others, finds himself involved in pecuniary difficulties, and obliged to pursue against his will a system of the most rigid economy. Your mother, your sisters, admirably calculated to enjoy all the pleasures that wealth confers, deny themselves cheerfully and without a murmur almost every enjoyment that cannot be obtained without money. I (with bitter repentance for having spent far, far too much, before I had an idea of my father's small resources) shall probably expiate having done so by abandoning my profession here and embracing

<sup>1</sup> See *Blackwood*, June 1842, "A journey from Herat to Orenburg."



in India a new career, not like yours, marked with honour and distinction, but one neither so certain, so honourable, or so happy as remaining at the Bar here. I feel that I should be a wretch did I spend one sixpence more than absolutely necessary, and this feeling would poison any enjoyment thus purchased at the expense of those so dear to us. Think well on these things, old boy, and I am sure the pleasure, the luxury of feeling that you are acting a manly part—and that your forbearance eases the burden of your father and the privations of your sisters, will more than compensate any trivial and passing mortification. There is no harm in the pint of porter from time to time—when you have money in your pocket to pay for it. When not, rely upon it, it becomes the bitterest draught you can take. . . .

Forgive this long and prosy letter, my dear John. Above all things *confide in me*, however unpalatable it may be, and let me know what your feelings are on this subject.

### *To his Father*

TEMPLE, April 29, 1842.

MY DEAREST FATHER,

I received your kind letter yesterday, and as I know that you and my mother are anxious to hear my answer I hasten to send it. Deeply grieved I was to find that my communication had cost pain to either you or her—to avoid ever giving you pain for a moment is my most anxious desire, and ought to be while such a thing as gratitude for the kindest, best, most generous parents exists. I therefore feel the greatest pleasure in relieving you from one source of anxiety, as I fully concur with you in thinking that it would be the height of folly in me to do anything which might form an obstacle to my success here, supposing me to continue here, or by a premature disclosure of my plans to cut off all hope of settling in England. I have therefore not mentioned the plan I had proposed to myself, save to a few tried friends such as Hill, whom I have consulted—and you may be sure I shall do everything on my part to secure success in this country if practicable—fully agreeing



with you in preferring a moderate competency here to a brilliant position abroad. But my reason for what you think a change of plan on my part, in mentioning the end of this year as the time for going, if I go at all, is the following :

Major Irvine wrote me a very minute and faithful account of the state of the bar there, with the names of those practising there and their characters, strongly urging me, *if I go at all*, to do so at once, as there was, from the state of the bar, a better opening now for a young man than there had been for long, and than there was a prospect of being again—as, if I delayed, other competitors might come out in the meantime, whom, if I preceded them, I should have nothing to fear from, but who, if they precede me, might interpose great delay to my advancement there—and as absolutely nothing was to be gained *there* by the time passed and standing gained *here*. In all this, Sir L. Peel, the Advocate-General, concurred. Since then the opening has become far finer by Peel's promotion as judge of the Supreme Court. The new Advocate-General, Lyall, a man of no eminence here and appointed from his relationship to the late Chairman, does not go out till June—and a great quantity of business is thus then afloat and changes hands, which, if Lyall proves unequal to his predecessor in ability, must go permanently into the hands of juniors. The dread of being anticipated is so great that it seems a pity to risk, for the contingency of success here, the almost certainty out there. However, between this and August I shall have a fair opportunity of judging what my prospects are here. Hill will kindly put some of the business into my hands which will give me an opportunity (tho' it puts no fees into my pockets) of showing that I am here ready to take business, and considered fit to be trusted with it ; and in my opinion and that of everyone connected with the bar, these four months will be as good a test of the likelihood of a man to succeed at first as in 2 years. Of course if one could stay 5 or 6 years, as if there was nothing to be gained by a rapid push in India—it would be far pleasanter and more advisable to stay, but as it is, I think prudence says, make up your mind by the Vacation whether you go or stay—if you go, do so by the end of the year. With respect to health, which I esteem the most inestimable of blessings, I feel very confident (I humbly trust not presumptuously

so) that India would agree wonderfully with my constitution. . . .

30th.—Since writing the above, my dear parents and sisters, I have passed the Rubicon and been called to the Bar. My great regret in doing so has been to think of the large sums of which I have deprived you in order to attain this object, and leading to but a questionable result. However, I feel confident that, in one way or the other, I shall have the happiness of repaying you for your indulgence and generosity towards me, and this, believe me, is and ever will be the wish nearest my heart. I took my place in Court to-day *en grande tenue* and felt not a little proud of my long coveted but alas! easily won costume. The kind wishes of my friends are very cheering. I had on Sunday a very pleasant dinner at the Attorney-General's. . . .

### To Charlotte

TEMPLE, Saturday, May 21, 1842.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I write for the purpose of informing you about our John's movements, as to which matter some of you are, I know, anxious. We have seen Mr. Bayley and heard from him that he has to sail within three months of the period of his taking the oaths, etc., at the India House—this he need not do till the 10th of June—so that he can stay till the 10th Sep. As, however, Mr. Bayley<sup>1</sup> urged, it is of great importance to him in the way of promotion that he should get sworn in, etc., as soon as possible. . . .

He returned yesterday (Friday) to Wanstead and intends making the most he possibly can of his time there, especially with the Hindostanee and military drawing. Bayley expressed himself much pleased with his appearance and demeanour. All our friends are full of congratulation—among others the Dicks, whom I took him to see.

I am much amused by a circumstance Mrs. Dick told me of Lady Rodd—I may have told you that John and myself called there and met with a most cordial

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Butterworth Bayley, ■ distinguished Indian Civil Servant, had become Director and Chairman of the East India Company.

reception. In such good spirits was she at the good account I gave her of you all, and myself, that she requested James to produce a bottle of champagne in which she drank our healths, and we, as you may suppose, hers. Well, a day or two afterwards, Mrs. Dick saw her, when her ladyship (as I heard to my utter surprise) gave the most gloomy picture of all our amiable family—expressing herself most anxious about Jane, of whom I had given her, as she said, an alarming account, fearing that John would not succeed in obtaining a cadetship, the whole interspersed with many doleful allusions to the deceased admiral. Was it that the champagne disagreed with her Ladyship, and that she only retained the recollection of the gloomy vision occasioned by nightmare consequent upon it, and forgot the bright account which led to its production? It must remain a mystery in metaphysics. . . .

I went yesterday over the dear old home in which we passed two such happy years. Our law term commences on Monday and I am to have the honour of taking Mrs. Trimmer and her two fair daughters to see the procession—grave, not gay—with which it opens. I may, without treason to my gentle charges, express a wish that they were replaced by another bella donna now in Paris with her 3 daughters. I shall expect to find Emily grown almost out of recollection. Did I tell you (I always forget what I have told you and what not, particularly as it will not bear repetition), that John and myself had visited Drury Lane and seen *Acis & Galatea*, an opera of Gay's—music Handel's—which has created some furore here. It was fine, but a bore. Sheridan's "*Duenna*" was very fairly played, and the sparkling wit of his dialogue is very charming. With kindest love to our dear Mother, and sisters, in which John joins with fervent good will, believe me, dearest Charlotte,

Ever your affectionate

W. R.

*To Jane*

*May 1842.*

MY DEAREST JANE,

This is a very shabby little corner to devote to you, who have been so kind in writing to me in more honourable

form. I will fill it up by telling you what I am sure I need not have addressed you thus to make you know, viz. that I more and more regret the absence of my dear little companion both in my walks and dances (the latter few and far between). I yesterday made a holiday in the morning: I went with John to the parade in St. James's Park, and afterwards into the Quadrangle, where we heard the music. I felt great self-reproach not to have taken you more often, and but for that, enjoyed beyond description the very fine music we heard. Adieu, my dearest; take care of yourself, and believe me

Your ever affect.

W. R.

*To his Father*

TEMPLE, June 23, 1842.

MY DEAREST FATHER,

I much rejoice to hear of John's pleasant passage and safe arrival and to think that you all appear so well reconciled to the departure of our young militaire. I feel anxious that you should once more maturely consider the advantages that may result from my accompanying him, in which case we might postpone his departure till towards the end of August. I confess that, after giving the matter my most anxious consideration, it appears to me very strongly that, supposing my mother and yourself can reconcile yourselves with comfort to such a step, the advantages that would result from it would be very great and such as I might lose for ever the chance of retrieving if now let pass by. Undoubtedly, to stay would be far more agreeable, even for a year with the prospect of going out at the end of that year, and as far as my position here is concerned, that year might not make much difference—but there appears to be at this moment an opening at the Calcutta Bar which may never occur again. Here, I cannot conceal from myself, my prospect of making a competency must for some years remain remote. In the meantime, however, I must remain a burden upon you, even the becoming a director in the [illegible] would still leave you to a certain extent hampered with my expenses, while our income is scarcely sufficient prudently to meet those of the family alone. On the other hand, if I go to India, it would



be in the full confidence of rendering myself independent after the first year, and in a very few years of materially assisting your income and saving the family from any future pecuniary anxiety. I write now urgently and for the last time on this subject, as the home circuit begins on the 6th July and my going out will depend on your decision—if you and my dear Mother think the pain of parting will not be too great and approve of my going with John, I should of course not encounter the expense of the Circuit, but, having made all arrangements, I should at once come over to you and pass with you six weeks which, although they may be somewhat embittered by the prospect of a parting which I trust confidently will be but a temporary one, will be most happily spent and will be, I trust, but the prelude to other happy ones we shall pass together hereafter. If, on the contrary, you think the parting with both her sons would be too great a blow to my mother, and still feel anxious for her sake and my own that I should stay another year, I will then go to about three places on the Circuit till the beginning of August, when I shall hope to see you here with John, previous to his departure, and to return with you to France.

*To Sir Frederick Pollock*<sup>1</sup>

July 1842.

MY DEAR SIR FREDERICK,

You were kind enough, before I left England, to promise to give me letters of introduction to the two great men of the law at Calcutta, Sir Lawrence Peel, the C. Justice, and the Advocate-General. These will be of so much service to me (especially as I have to apply to the former, on arriving, for his sanction to my practising there) that I am sure you will in your well-known kindness forgive me for exacting from you the trouble of writing them by the 1st Sept., on which eventful day I am unsportsmanlike enough to sail from Portsmouth by the P. of Wales. I fear that I shall not have an opportunity of seeing you

<sup>1</sup> Sir Frederick Pollock was then Attorney-General, and finally became Chief Baron of the Exchequer. He was the father of a family of twenty-four children.



again before I sail, altho' I feel that to you, my father in chivalry, who bestowed upon me the sword and spurs of the law in the shape of wig and gown, I a knight of maiden shield and sans device, but about to seek one in my Eastern crusade, ought to pay my last devoirs before sailing, and from you to seek the last counsels for my conduct and the last benediction on my arms. But tho' this be denied me, I feel that I sail under auspices that point to conquest, having been launched in my profession by its most eminent member, and being accompanied in my course with his good wishes and recommendations. Believe me, that whatever be my fortune in distant climes, I shall ever feel a deep gratitude for the unvarying kindness that I have met at your hands and retain a pleasing recollection of the many pleasant days which I have owed to you. May I hope, on my return, to find as much courtesy from the Chancellor as I have from the Attorney-General?

I regret much that I have not had an opportunity of bidding farewell to Lady Pollock, and trust you will tell her how much I regret that I have not, and how much pleasure it will ever give me to hear of the welfare of you and her. I see from the newspaper that I may congratulate you and her on a new birth. With my kindest regards and farewell wishes to Miss Rivers and the young ladies,

Believe me,

Ever truly and gratefully yours,

W. RITCHIE.

A young brother of mine who sails with me will join General Pollock's army soon after arriving at Calcutta. If any of you have aught to send which does not require the speedier delivery of the post, it will be conferring a service on him to let him take charge of it.

*To Charlotte*

*July 1842.*

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I am sure that you will be delighted with the contents of this letter when I tell you that I am charmed with

the commencement of my new career, and find the path far less thorny than I had anticipated. Do not imagine, from this, that I have been either making eloquent speeches or receiving still more eloquent fees—just know that the great source of my pleasure is that I have found that I am not condemned to idleness and total inaction in my profession, however much so I may be to poverty and disappointment. I have had several briefs to hold for my excellent friend Hill, which he was unable himself to hold (I need scarcely say that in these cases the remuneration is for the owner of the briefs, not mine, the workman's—according to all etiquette), so that, tho' not lucrative, the business I have had has been very encouraging. But I have already had some disappointments, which will make you, as they did me, half smile and half pity me. The second day I went into Court, then, a brief was brought to me to hold for Mr. Peacock<sup>1</sup> (a very clever barrister who could not himself attend). I was the junior in the cause, which was a most interesting one, the details of which I will spare you, but will merely tell you that my client was a very pretty, interesting girl of 20, who, something like the Angelina (I think) of Miss Edgeworth, had formed an attachment to a lady unknown to her except by letter, with whom ultimately she (being of a more practical turn of mind than Miss Edgeworth's heroine) contracted to enter into partnership as a schoolmistress. The article of partnership was on the point of being signed when a letter arrives from an uncle (these uncles are always in the way, whether in love or business) alleging rumours prejudicial to the elder lady's character, which led my fair client very properly to break off and withdraw from her engagement. Upon this the elderly but frail fair one brings this action to recover £100 and upwards. Well, my leader was obliged to leave the Court—my fair protégée sent for me in great distress, commits her destinies into my hands. I, proving that tho' a novice in law I am not one in sympathy, and that I was charmed to draw my inspiration from so pure a source, prepare to do battle in her behalf, and have just screwed, as had she, my courage to the sticking-place when—alas, alas! the old Judge Gurney says the cause will be a long one, he can't hear it that day, being the last sittings—and it is postponed indefinitely, my brief going out of my

<sup>1</sup> Sir Barnes Peacock, who afterwards became Chief Justice at Calcutta.

hands back into those of the happy and radiant Peacock. Now for disappointment No. 2. Hill gave me, the next night, a brief to hold for him before an arbitrator the following morning. I, being on the point of going to a very pleasant ball (Mrs. Trench's), I find that I have to examine some of the first chemists in England as to the whole process of making gas, of which I know nothing more than the head of the inventor which I have seen in Père-la-Chaise. Need I say I gave up the ball, read chemical books till I was myself like a gas-pipe ready to explode with my condensed contents, and was on the scene of action, when—I find the opposite counsel unable to attend, and that the attornies on both sides have agreed to pair off and conduct the case themselves without counsel. Thus end my disappointments, and to compensate gloriously for them, I yesterday received my 1st fee, ■ guineas and one half guinea to my clerk (so I've paid for my gown—I hope some day to earn enough for one for you, but you must not be too sanguine). I attended another arbitration in which I gained my point ! I need scarcely say it was to Mr. Hill's kindness and recommendation that I owed this delightful launch into money-making. You will be surprised to hear that my client in this case was a common boatman, named Job Wood, who claims to be the heir-at-law to the celebrated Jemmy Wood, the lord of millions, whose will has been so profitable to the higher members of my profession, as it was yesterday to its humbler members. One unfortunate link in his chain of evidence is wanting, and this I fear he will not be able to supply—otherwise he would be entitled to receive £10,000, which the devisees under the will are to pay to the heir-at-law—the present investigation is to determine whether or not ■ certain other claimant is that heir-at-law—and all that I wanted was to compel the arbitrator to receive evidence of my client's claim. To-morrow I hold ■ brief for Hill (unpaid) at Guildhall before a jury, and there ends for the present the history of my Court practice.

My letter has been extraordinarily selfish, but I know it will afford pleasure to your kind and affectionate heart. To-day, this being Saturday, John came up to share my modest and perchance evanescent triumph. Will Thackeray is in town, but I have hitherto missed seeing him.

Your affect. ♥

W. R.

*To Mrs. Trimmer*

TEMPLE, *written about this time.*

DEAR MRS. TRIMMER,

Will any of you be at home between 3 and half-past? I shall come then to St. George's Terrace and take the chance of finding some of you inclined to take a very gentle walk.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. RITCHIE.

Tuesday morning.

*To his Mother, Mrs. Ritchie, 12 Rue d'Aguesseau, Faubourg St. Honoré, Paris*

MAIDSTONE, July 14, 1842.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . I came to this place to-day & had the most charming journey thro' a very beautiful country. The law of the Circuit allows us to steam to Gravesend, & thence a right merry party of 7 of us filled two open postchaises for the remaining 16 miles. The town is beautifully situated, & the air of the country has put me in indescribably good spirits. I believe that I am like my father in my partiality for the water, as the instant my foot is on board a boat of whatever kind, my health & mind appear to become livelier & happier than before. Thus I anticipate real pleasure for that which I fear appears to you formidable, the voyage, & am sure you will feel happier in reflecting that in all my late voyages, tho' exposed sometimes to boisterous weather, I have baffled the attempts of sea-sickness on either mind or body. Still more shall I be exempt from its attacks in the noble vessel which is to conduct Johannes and myself to our destination. We passed both of them to-day looking as majestic as two rival sea-queens & commanding the admiration of all who passed them.

Everything has seemed to prosper since my resolve of going—you will see from the line below to my father that our pecuniary arrangements as to our sailing have been made in a very satisfactory manner. I cannot



quite say with certainty whether I join you next week or the following, i.e. whether by the 23rd or not, and consequently whether we sail by the 1st or the 15th. This depends on whether I find it advisable to go to Lewes next week or not, & this I shall know by Saturday. On account of John's promotion the 1st would be preferable, as also we should thereby gain a fortnight of what I hear is delightful cool weather at Calcutta. However, as this continues till the end of February, & as in either case we should arrive (I trust) before January, we are sure that we shall not meet as warm a reception from the climate as we hope to do from our friends.

The Dicks are full of happy presage for my undertaking & I see them often on the subject. They & the Trimmers are those of our friends here whom I shall most regret leaving; but be not alarmed at the latter announcement, as notwithstanding the espiègle look with which my dear Janey will receive it, I am happy in being able to declare that I retire perfectly heartwhole & at liberty to marry Bébé Mack herself should she present herself to me with her lack-lustre countenance, tho' I confess I should prefer one of the fair deities of St. George's Terrace. They are going to N. Wales for the rest of the summer, & my Janey will not be sorry to hear that I played the last of the many pleasant scenes I have enjoyed in this county at a very pleasant ball to which I went with them, & at which I stayed this very morning till  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4, and that I have come out of the ordeal scathless. Nothing can be pleasanter than the society of the circuit so far as I have seen it. I shall ever look back with pleasure to the short but happy time I have spent among my brothers in my profession here, & look forward with the same feelings to resuming that intercourse on my return. Besides them, & the friends I have before mentioned, there is scarce anyone here, I find to my surprise, about parting from whom I shall feel much concern.

*To Miss Blanche Trimmer*

(Probably) July 27, 1842.

(PRIVATE.)

. . . When years have passed by, when she has ceased to look upon me in any light save that in which



you regard me, Blanche, as a dear friend and brother (forgive me if I am wrong and vain in thinking this of you)—which, tho' it may not be soon, still may be, and if in addition to this my letters show that my prospects are not such as to enable me to think of marriage within any definite period—why, then, some man more worthy of her than myself (one less worthy I feel she will never choose) may win, first her esteem, then her affection, without any violence to her former feelings—and this without possible injury to her, as this hypothesis supposes me to be a poor unsuccessful man who never can afford to marry. And lest you should think I am acting too heroically in pointing out the possibility of such a sacrifice of my affections, I will tell you, Miss Blanche, that I have listened long enough to her songs to have somewhat of her Montrose in me, and to think that he does not deserve the name of a man who cannot in active life recover, if not forget, the transfer of a woman's affections. Supposing her engaged to me before I got there, and that then I found success was not within my grasp, what would be my feelings in writing to her that it was so, what hers on hearing so from me?

However, these sombre thoughts of failure are not my own naturally—they are forced on me only when I turn from myself to one who should be far dearer to me, and if my brighter visions be realized, will they not be heightened by happiness far greater than I had ventured to dream of, if shared by her? I therefore strongly retain my resolution, which I trust both mamma and you will approve, not to say to her one word of love until I see before me a fair prospect of success. At the earliest moment at which a glimpse of that opens to me, I shall hear from you what are her feelings, and hope there, as in all things, that Providence may dispose for the best.

In justice to my dear parents' wishes, I long to say this,—that they do not, one of them, dream that any part of my object in seeking fortune in the East is to benefit them. Sure I am that that thought would give as great a pang to them in parting from me, as it does pleasure and resolution to me in going. An inadvertent expression of my wishes to that effect caused our dear Jane so much distress that I dread the idea gaining them—(but need I tell you that this generous feeling on their part but increases tenfold my desire to accomplish for them what I have resolved

before consulting my own personal welfare ?) Forgive my tediousness—that of lovers to their wished-for sisters is proverbial.

Ever, my dear kind Blanche,

Yrs. Affectly.,

W. R.

### *Page from a Diary*

A torn page from my father's note-book written on his sailing to India, in 1842, gives a diary of his last days in England.

The reverse to his father's fortunes, and the uncertainty as to his own prospect of being able to afford to marry, had roused in him the strongest doubts and perplexities as to whether he was justified in proposing marriage to my mother :

### EXTRACT

. . . Let me remember this if the [illegible] which I now banish as unworthy from my thoughts be realized—and let me bear it like a man, reflecting that the day may be at hand when even that condition, dreadful as it is, may be surpassed in horror, eclipsed in gloom, by some evil I now little foresee.

A few dates may help me to a retrospect, soothing if not useful.

13th July.—Our last waltz.

14th.—To Maidstone Home Circuit.

18th.—Walk to London.

20th.—In evening. Sings.

21st.—Launch of Queen. Disappointment. Pollock's.

22nd.—Evening—no song.

23rd.—Visit P. of Wales.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ship in which he sailed to India, which he visited with Miss Trimmer.

24th.—Kensington Gardens. Dicks.

25th.—Ride.

26th.—Dine [illegible]. Sung.

27th.—Left her.

28th.—Embark.

29th.—Arrive at Paris.

31st.—Garthewen [meaning the Trimmers go there].

Aug. 20th.—My father and John leave Paris.

25th.—Leave my mother and sisters.

26th.—Black.

27th.—Reach London. Take railway.

Sunday, 28th.—The happiest day of my life I shall ever know!

29th.—Leave her—must I say for ever?

30th.—Reach London. The Dicks.

31st.—If possible as black as Sunday was fair—but no, no. I don't remember the anguish of the one so well as the rapture of the other.

Thursday, 1st Sept.—Reach Gosport by Railway at 1 a.m., at 3 a.m. embark for the Prince of Wales. Reach it about half past 4 a.m. The morning in unison with my feelings—as melancholy as the worst, with which any poor broken-hearted fellow ever entered the ship, consigned to exile—but my fears were not of exile—that I courted and could have hugged—but they were the cankering suspicions of doubt which kind Providence has now averted, and which may they never more enter this bosom.

*To Mrs. Trimmer*

PARIS, Monday, August 22, 1842.

MY DEAR MRS. TRIMMER,

. . . I still think that in a prudential point of view it would be far better for Augusta, nay for both of us, that I should leave England without disclosing my feelings towards her, provided that she does not already feel herself

bound to me so immutably that no disclosure on my part, no misfortune, no delay, can sever the tie between us. If she feels this, I agree with you that any further concealment is not only useless but cruel to us both, that I must deem myself the cause of the destruction of a bright and happy existence that was opening before her, and that the best remedy which can be given for the social discomfort which must arise to her from the tie that binds us irrevocably is to be found in the open, unrestrained interchange of our affections. . . .

I feel it my duty to place for one last time before you more explicitly than I have before (I cannot more earnestly) what Augusta's prospects will be if she be bound to me for weel or for woe, that is if I speak to her before I go.

My parents' income has, through a series of most sudden and unforeseen misfortunes within the last two or three years, dwindled down to a small pittance under £400 a year. Their prospect of recovering any part is in my judgment hopeless. There is even a distant possibility of its being still further reduced. I have elected, as both my duty and inclination led me to do, to take a few hundreds now, abandoning the rest that I might be entitled to hereafter, and with them to seek in the East a better fortune, which would be worthless to me were it not for the prospect of sharing it with those to whom I owe everything. . . .

But to descend again to figures. I shall not feel happy until I can set aside for them £500 each year out of my gains, and until I can do this nothing shall shake my resolve to limit my own expenditure to the smallest possible amount consistent with my position. Living is more expensive there than here: as a bachelor I can scarcely live under £400 a year, as a married man under £1,000. So that you see my union with Augusta must be postponed until I am making steadily at least £1,500 a year. Now when this may be, it is impossible for me or for anyone to say; the field is a fine one and my connections good, and if there were no more competitors than there used to be, I should not doubt of realizing this in a very few years. But unfortunately for us, attention has been excited to the opening there among the briefless here, and since the new Advocate-General sailed in May, there are no less than three able clever men (exclusive of one to whom perhaps





MRS. WILLIAM RITCHIE, NÉE AUGUSTA TRIMMER.



WILLIAM RITCHIE.





your kindness might assign that title) who either have, or are about to sail, for Calcutta on the same errand. Had I no one depending on me but myself, were I, as I used to think, myself independent of fortune as in mind, the fair honorable competition which I should thus encounter would give me pleasure instead of fear; but, as it is, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that it will very much retard my prospect of early, if not of permanent, success, and that I must not indulge the hope of making the income I have alluded to for at least five years. Nay more, that I ought not to do any act affecting the happiness of another upon a supposition so uncertain as that at the end of five years I should have met with so much success. Well then—5, 6, 7, may be 8 years hence before I offer a home to Augusta. . . . I offer a home, but what a home! Remember the chances of climate, the separation from you, and still worse (if possible), the cruel, heart-breaking separation from her children which a long residence in India renders necessary. Our residence there must be long, for fortunes are not now made there as Lord Clive's and Warren Hastings' were, and probably fifteen years from the day of my marriage will not enable me to realize more than sufficient to retire with,—possibly twenty may not. These are Augusta's prospects if I speak to her. The generosity of her heart would probably lead her to embrace them cheerfully, and without a sigh for the sacrifice, but alas! before the long long years have passed by, how many a sigh (of anguish if not of regret) will it cost her, and if Blanche and you had known, as I have, how chilling to a young and generous mind are the withering blasts of misfortune, you would pause as I do, ere you brought the possibility of them by a single word on the head of one we all love so much.

I have now told you the unvarnished truth in detail, as I did before generally. If there be yet time, and if even a chance of escape for Augusta in the event of my evil fortune exists, for Heaven's sake let us take advantage of it, and do not let her know more than that I feel for her an affection which, under happier circumstances, would have led me to ask of her a return,—but which now tyrant duty compels me to try to subdue. If it be too late, or if my picture does not frighten you (which, if it does not, can only be from my not feeling the heart, situated as I

am, to draw it black enough), then I will speak to her, if I can in person, if not by letter. . . .

I entreat you to weigh well what I have said, and to believe me, whatever happen,

Ever your affectionate

WM. RITCHIE.

My father had been to Garthewen and had spoken. This letter is written in the midst of business two days before sailing, and is of a matter-of-fact character, showing that he and my mother had thoroughly understood each other after their long conversations.

*To Miss Trimmer*

LONDON, *Tuesday, August 30, 1842.*

I have just time, my dearest Augusta, to send you this one line to say that I reached town in great safety, at 1 o'clock, that I have seen your uncle, who will probably go to you on Monday next, that we sail at daybreak on Thursday, Sept. 1 (when probably Mr. Robert Wynne will be firing a signal-gun for us at the first partridge), that I am overwhelmed with business, that I indite this letter in the most unloverlike attitude, viz. leaning over my tailor's counter, that I am most anxious to hear from you ere I sail, and that for this purpose I shall be ever grateful if you will write to me at Messrs. Green, 64, Cornhill, on the chance of its reaching me, as they send down the Captain's Bag the moment before sailing. My father's movements I am uncertain of, but think he will return to town (I've scarce had time to see him), but if you have anything to send my mother, will you direct it to your uncle, who will communicate with my father.

Heaven grant, dearest, that this may find you well and happy, and that you may never owe one bitter thought to

Your ever affectionate

W. RITCHIE.

I shall write from the ship.

The 9th part of a man who furnishes me with this paper tells me that it rained nearly all yesterday in town, and that there was a great thunderstorm. Blessed be Garthwen ! What cause of happiness I have, my beloved, on every account ! I feel that I should be most ungrateful did I ever repine at the hard necessity of leaving you, with so much to palliate the anguish of the parting. My kindest love to all.

## CHAPTER IV

1842-45

### LETTERS ON THE VOYAGE AND FROM CALCUTTA

THE Calcutta of the present day in some respects is curiously like the Calcutta with which my father made acquaintance in 1842. He went out to practise in that historic Supreme Court of which Sir Elijah Impey was the first Chief Justice and whose early contests with the Governor-General and the Company's servants are a matter of history. The Supreme Court, established under the Regulating Act of 1773, was presided over by English lawyers, supported by English barristers, who in 1842 were but sixteen in number. The proceedings were strictly according to the forms of English law. The Court had special jurisdiction over the affairs of all Europeans in Bengal, it tried causes against the Company, and had full civil and criminal powers in the town of Calcutta with its large mercantile community.

Alongside of the Supreme Court was the Sudder Court (the chief state court, abbreviated from the Persian *Sudder Dewáni Nizámat Adálat*), presided over by the Company's servants, remodelled by Lord Wellesley in 1800, with all its proceedings in the vernacular and before which, strange to say, English barristers could not plead. There was almost as strong rivalry and jealousy between the Company's servants and the Crown's as between Cardinal's and King's men in the pages of Dumas. Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay* recalls the prejudice against Macaulay from 1834 to 1838—only four years before my father's arrival—on the part of some Calcutta lawyers, because he enlarged the powers of the Sudder at the expense of the Supreme Court. The changes then originated culminated in 1862



in the fusion of the two Courts into one, the present High Court, presided over by fifteen Judges chosen from among English barristers, civil servants and Indians, who administer the codified Indian law. The Calcutta practising bar of to-day (1914) numbers some two hundred and fifty members as well as numerous Indian pleaders.

My father, on arrival, seems to have imbibed a little of the *esprit de corps* of his Calcutta brethren, for I find him referring disparagingly to Macaulay's qualifications for law reform in India, an opinion that he changed later on. He is severe upon the Company and its methods, no doubt with considerable justice. In his comments he exhibits the manly independence of judgment for which the best lawyers from England have always been distinguished—a valuable asset in a bureaucratically governed country.

In 1842 the Governor-General was nominally responsible for the administration of Bengal, the real ruler being the Deputy-Governor, who had none of the importance of a Lieutenant-Governor of later days.

Calcutta itself has not changed much. The Cathedral was being completed, now such a landmark on the Maidán. The houses in Kyd Street, where my father first lived with the Irvines, and in Midleton Street, where he began his married life, are still standing. Few, however, of the fine old houses in Garden Reach, standing on the bank of a noble reach of the river, whither the Irvines moved from Kyd Street, are still occupied as residences. The two-mile length of Indiamen and sailing vessels lying in the river, one of the finest sights in the world, has given place to a much shorter line of funnelled steamers. There were no amenities of drainage or water supply in 1842, and the unhealthiness of the town was much greater. Many sad instances of throwing away of life I have omitted from the extracts. Huge adjutant-birds, the scavengers of nature, abounded in the streets.

Outside, in the "Mofussil," there was not a single railway. To reach Darjeeling was a long and arduous journey, and my father only once saw the Himalayas, in the year before

his death. To recruit their health, Calcutta people took a sea-trip to the mouth of the river, to Madras or to Ceylon. Ocean-going steamers were an absolute novelty, and the overland route by the Red Sea and Egypt had only just been opened. Mails were carried each way once a month, and the transit took over six weeks.

Calcutta Society was smaller, and, then as now, much given to hospitality. The look of the country, with its eternal greenness and luxuriant vegetation, the glorious starlit nights, the invigorating freshness and charm of the cold weather, the grandeur of the tropical storms—all evoke my father's enthusiasm as a new-comer. He was determined to see nothing but the bright side of the land of his adoption, and we may be sure that from the first his kindly nature brought life and brightness into all the spheres in which he moved, and specially into that hospitable Irvine household of which he gives such pleasant pictures.

William was in a position to marry on December 4, 1845, at St. John's Church, Calcutta.

### *To Miss Trimmer*

*September 1, 1842.*

You are destined again to-day, my dearest Augusta, to receive an illegible scrawl, and poor requital for your dear and charming letter, which I yesterday told you I had received. My father, and brother with myself, got on board here at 3 this morning—winds were blowing, waters flowing—and there was every probability of our sailing at 5; but the wind is directly in our teeth, the rain falls in torrents, and the captain has gone ashore, which last is the most certain indication of our not sailing at all events till this evening's tide, probably not till to-morrow morning. In either case you shall hear from me once more, but I cannot let the boat put off without these lines to tell my dear Augusta that I have felt a altered man from the moment I put my foot on board the ship, or rather from the moment we entered, in all the enjoyment of what the sailors very

appropriately term a dirty morning, the little boat which brought us out the 3 or 4 miles that we are lying out at sea.—As I told you yesterday, I could not conceal from you the cruel pain I felt in going, nor the evil presentiments which clouded my last day in my native land. Such a concealment I should deem a want of confidence towards you, to whom I hope to entrust every thought that is not unworthy of you—and from whom I venture to expect a similar confidence. But the instant we entered our “frêle embarcation,” as a Frenchman would pompously call our dirty little skiff, & she danced before the wind, like a lover to meet his mistress, thro’ fog & spray & rain, I felt that it was an unmanly act on my part to allow for one instant my spirits to sink under anything so unworthy of a thought. I felt my confidence in our own destiny renew, my Augusta, and the foul & unfavourable night appeared to me brighter far than the brightest day, albeit it took me farther from you. . . . When I speak of destiny, dearest, you will do me the justice to think I do not mean a lot blindly marked out for us, & without our own control, but that destiny which all-seeing Providence allots to those who do not swerve from their duty, & study to deserve its blessings, and in that sense have I the fullest confidence that, if we both follow that path which conscience tells us to be the right one, we shall neither of us repine at the consequences to which such conduct will lead us.—But I will not spend the few moments I have in uttering things which you both feel & express infinitely better than myself. I will tell you, instead, hoping it may please you to hear it, that we are now settled most comfortably—our first 3 or 4 hours were a scene of horrible confusion ; but, thanks to a clever carpenter, we are now monarchs of all we survey in our little cabin, which looks quite stately in its borrowed plumes—we have had time to eat one enormous meal which, if anything can, must determine the owners not to linger one hour unnecessarily. . . . The boat will be off, and the red-haired boatswain is in the room, who doubtless guesses I am writing to you & therefore condescends to wait till I fold this. Ever, dearest, yours most truly,

W. R.

I write every day till we sail—when you cease to hear, you will be sure we’re gone.

*To Miss Trimmer*

PRINCE OF WALES, OFF PORTSMOUTH,  
*September 1, 1842.*

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

If my present letter is to be as worthless as that I wrote this morning, it shall not be so hurried—for I resume my pen which your friend the boatswain compelled me two minutes ago reluctantly to resign, and with my pen will strive to resume the thoughts which his presence tended slightly to disturb, when writing to you.

Who can control his fate ! I thought I was writing to you a letter long and full, but I was suddenly called away, and on resuming my pen, fully expecting not to sail till at least to-morrow night, a cry of joy was heard from about 200 voices which proclaimed that the wind had changed and the anchor was being weighed. My father has been summoned to shore, and with him must go my letter and in it my parting. Oh, dearest, think not that the years of absence that are before us can for an instant impair the affection I bear to you—think not that whatever at times and in moments few and far between of depression I may have augured of it to us, I look to anything but happiness, long blessed in its enjoyment, that will surely compensate us for all that we are having, or are, to suffer. Think that I go under the happiest auspices—that I am accompanied by the kind wishes of many many friends of whose friendship I have every reason to be proud, and the loss of whom would be most grievous to me were it not for the greater pang of parting from my Augusta—that, going with the motive that I do, which my conscience tells me to be the best and purest that can actuate me—I cannot fail to succeed, and on that success to make thee happy, Augusta. It seems like a dream to me that I shall be for so long gone from you—that in a few minutes I shall in vain expect to hear from you—but it is a dream from which I am sure of a happy awakening. Bear them as blessings on thy head, my dearest and kindest. I forgot about my country in the two feelings which absorb me at the moment—my mother and thee, my dearest—but, tho' apparently ungrateful to England,

Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
Tho' banished, yet a true-born Englishman.

So believe that nothing shall ever extinguish my affection for the land of my birth, or diminish my exertions to offer



to you a happy home at the earliest, in our own country, on our return from my foster one.

I have no time for another word but farewell. Never was it said with a sadder heart, tho' with a more ardent confidence of its not being a last one.

Your ever most truly

W. R.

I send no romantic memorial—but a bit of our biscuit.

Thursday,  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5 p.m.

MISS AUGUSTA TRIMMER,  
Garthewen, near Abergale, North Wales.

### *To Miss Trimmer*

PRINCE OF WALES, latitude 13.40, long. 22.

*Begun September 19, 1842.*

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

. . . But to my narrative. With the dawn of day, after I wrote my last letter to you, our pilot left us and we left the Channel, and since that dawn all has smiled most propitiously on us. The wind changed to our advantage, and we have not had a single unfavourable day.—Our noble vessel excites my admiration more every day and fulfils every expectation of her sailing and sea qualities. We have literally flown by every vessel bound on the same course with ourselves, and this, if you remember our exertions on our Richmond picnic to outstrip our less numerous but fresher rivals, you will feel to be no small source of enjoyment in itself.—One day (Tuesday, the 6th, I think) and only one, we had a brisk gale, luckily favourable, and a finer sight I have never beheld than to see our gallant ship bound over the gigantic waves that struck her, without for a moment checking her majestic career. With all her canvas spread, lying down steadily on one side till the upper ports kissed the water, and flinging aside the billows as tho' she heeded them not, she looked like a fiery horse urged to his utmost speed thro' a ravine by a skilful rider. We passed several large vessels scudding, like ourselves, before the breeze, and must have astonished them by the rapidity with which we first caught and then vanished from them. I never felt more pleasure from physical excitement than that day and confess I envied our Captain, who you may conceive exulted "in such a gallant bark."



He is famous, among other excellent qualities, for carrying as much sail as the weather will permit, and I was amused that day, while helping at the ropes and an order being given to set the royals, on asking an old boatswain's mate if he was not surprised to hear that, at receiving this answer, "Surprised, Sir! don't we sail with Capt. Denny?" No other vessel that we saw ventured to carry any sail above the topsail, and those they had all close reefed (i.e. dwindled to their smallest span). I fear even you will think "Somewhat too much of this," and I will only therefore add that for 6 hours consecutively we went 13 knots an hour, and that, to my great regret and the joy of the ladies, we have had no recurrence of the breeze. It carried us to the skirts of the Bay of Biscay, by which we got without any of that fierce tossing one anticipates from the formidable name so celebrated by your uncle.

*September 19, latd. 13.40, long. 21.*

Since writing the above nonsense to you, we have become becalmed, or almost so, under the fierce tropical sun of latitude  $13^{\circ}$  N., or nearly off Cape de Verde. We were unfortunate in not meeting with the brisk trade-wind we had looked to to carry us near the line, and that which we had being very slight and the sailors thinking they have a vested right to a good N.E. breeze thro' the last 8 degrees of latitude, and complaining of it as having cheated us, it has now, doubtless in disgust at our ingratitude, quitted us altogether, so that I have now a different tale to tell you of sails flapping in the wind and other incidents attending this least interesting of nautical positions. Well, it still has some compensating advantages—the heat I find (except at dinner-time) delightful, and the time altogether passes with respectable rapidity tho' not quite with that of a railway.—My time is generally thus passed. At 6 a bath of the most primitive and at the same time the most refreshing character—consisting of a vast tub on deck full of sea-water in which you are immersed while 7 or 8 sailors pour continuously, and with right good will, pail after pail upon your head. I read till dinner-time (half-past three) with the exception of breakfast at half-past eight and the time taken up by the observations at 9 & 12 by which we determine our latitude & longitude—at which my astronomical smatterings enable me to assist, while the

officers taking them lend me their instruments and receive with great apparent deference but really with good-humoured contempt the learning I edify them with. Then comes dinner, the object of many a longing wish before and many a regret for its departure after its arrival, and at this the table actually groans with the good things with which the steward loads it, and the bad things we try to pass for good ones in a war of jokes which sometimes waxes as furious as the storm without, but never simultaneously with it—indeed the storm of puns ever varies inversely with that of the elements. After dinner, the ladies come on deck and the evening passes amidst the usual ingredients of walking, small-talking, dancing, singing, tea, and—I blush to say it—potations, which in England would be called very strong grog, but which the fair Sirens of our seas are prevailed on to take without even assumed reluctance under a milder title. In a word, never did men eat or ladies drink more than those of the good ship Prince of Wales.—Having caught the infectious spirit of scandal which here prevails, shall I own to you that I never was so sick of women and seldom more pleased with men than those on board. From henceforth, indeed, I shall ever look with pity on the man who owns the blessing of a wife to that far-famed scene of match-making—an outward voyage in an Indiaman. Not that there are no attractions among the 20 fair creatures who daily grace our cuddy—gallantry and truth both revolt at the idea. But nature has acted kindly in apportioning her gifts among them—those that are pretty are so conceited and bent on breaking hearts, those that are ladylike and unaffected are so stupid, and those that are clever drink so much and are so generally disagreeable, that it would require Temple's imagination to be enraptured with any of them. The worst of the matter is, that according to Indiaman law the man who is fortunate enough to hand one of those delicate beings to a seat, when he emerges after dinner from his cabin upon deck, is expected not to discontinue his attentions for one moment throughout the evening, inclusive of the grog-time finale, so that for a susceptible heart there is no chance of escape. Having learnt by dear-bought experience that such is the case, the first flutter of female raiment which darkens the companion impels me, not as of old, to rush to the rescue with heart equally fluttering, but to fix my eyes intently

upon the horizon and to go thro' the process of a man who flatters himself he sees a sail.—Thus I am now free to “sip every flower, to change every hour,” and to get rid of the only disagreeable drawback upon a sea-life. At dinner I am honoured with a seat next a lady who lately ruled as a kind of queen in Calcutta, a Mrs. Ferguson—a woman who has now grown too fat to be pretty, but inordinately vain, and who, having been hitherto surrounded by a tribe of adulators, is more exacting than Herodias and less tolerant than Mrs. W. She piques herself upon her repartee and sarcasm, and many are the spears we have broken in the encounters of our wits, which are too fierce to be agreeable in these hot latitudes. But, with the Captain's assistance, I have appeased this obdurate fair one—for we have persuaded a youth on board that the cause of the lady's discontent is a deep-seated affection for him, and he now prodigalizes upon her all those soothing attentions to which she felt by prescriptive right entitled, and her pleasure in the acquisition has rendered her almost agreeable.—We have three Irish sisters on board, two married—the prettier of them desperate in her accent and her flirtations. Miss Brown, I think I told you, is 45 and squints—a religious shoemaker awaits her at Calcutta to further the great work of Hindoo proselytism.—But with all this, I am bound to say our re-unions at dinner are very pleasant and perhaps my censure is too sweeping. But with the men, particularly the officers of the ship, I am delighted. The Captain is a very fine fellow, the best specimen I have ever seen of that rare character—a polished sailor. The Chief Officer, whom you saw, is a good specimen of a rough one,<sup>1</sup> and the second and third mates are two of the finest young men imaginable—the surgeon of the ship, Clarke, is a young man of great scientific attainments—so my astronomical aspirations for the voyage are more than realized. Among the other passengers there is much good-humour and pleasantry; but, with the exception of one great friend of mine, little talent or attainment.—The nights are, beyond expression, beautiful—new constellations each night unfold themselves

<sup>1</sup> *December 26.*—I am very wrong for using this expression of him—for Gregson is one of the kindest, best-hearted friends I have ever made, with nothing rough in his manners, but, on the contrary—tho' a plain-spoken, straightforward sailor, most kind and considerate, even in his manner—I part from him in great regret.



to us,—and many a long hour do we pass after our fair jailors have tired of gazing on the beautiful scene, and many a thought does at least one of us then send homeward.—We have not now seen a sail or symptom of humanity for 8 days, and the last we saw was an interesting and sorrowful sight—it was the sheer hulk of a huge schooner waterlogged and abandoned, drifting at the mercy of the waves, which now played gently over their victim, on which they seemed to laugh as they broke. The interest was intensely excited by an appearance which looked like a human form still clinging to the wreck ; but we lowered two boats, in one of which I went, and found it was merely the stump of a mast. On getting upon her we found, from the shell-fish with which she was encrusted and other signs, that she had been several months in that state—and, from the peculiar manner in which the remnants of rigging had been cut, the sailors concluded that her crew had been saved. A more striking contrast I never beheld than that which the poor helpless thing on which we stood formed with our tall ship which lay half a mile off, and seemed, in its pride and beauty, to dare the elements which had proved so fatal to its weaker sister—it was the contrast of the living and the corpse. The various monsters of the deep rallied round and round her like eagles at the carnage—hundreds of dolphins sported about, with their gay colours sparkling in the sun—together with the porpoise (the boneta) and the flying-fish. And, as there must be a ludicrous side to everything, poor Watts, the red-haired boatswain, whom you remember (the smartest and best-humoured of boatswains, who is so indefatigable that he appears to have 3 voices, 6 pairs of hands, and no sleeping power) was by a sudden lurch of the wreck which sent everyone upon it against him, and him partially into the sea, immersed as to his head and shoulders, but no farther, for at least twelve hands seized him by the most available leg—and on again shining is that honest, dripping face, which to have lost would have been indeed a blow. He assured us, with horror depicted in every line of it, that immediately beneath, and yawning to receive him, there grinned the jaws of a prodigious shark. As no one else saw it, however, we made him very angry by declaring that “his fear was father to the thought.” We captured as fair prize a number of excellent planks (Sept. 21st, Latitude 11.16, W. Longitude 21), which

formed her cargo, and they now formed benches for the sailors on Sunday at church.—On Sunday, the 11th Sept., we passed without putting into Madeira, and in the minds of us who gazed with tantalized eyes upon its fair outline, the ancients did well in fixing there the islands of the blessed. Conceive the most lovely climate with which nature ever gifted an earthly spot—sky and sea rivalling each other in their lovely deep blue hue—a breeze of 9 knots an hour filling our sails and curling with silver the tops of each wave and breathing upon us with a balm and softness unknown in less favoured climes—a long line of lovely mountains rising immediately from the sea to a height of 4,000 feet and of an hue that is perfectly indescribable, but reminding one of those pictures of Martin, on which we looked together two years since, of “Before and After the Deluge,” or of your own song: “The blue mountains glow in the sun’s golden light,”—all combined to render the scene as enchanting and as fleeting, alas! as one of faerie or dreamland.—We have since passed the Peak of Teneriffe looming very indistinctly, 80 miles off, and possibly shall not see land again till our arrival. In the tropics the sea lost its beautiful blue colour (a perfect azure and always silvered with white) and has assumed a pale green hue—and the calm has continued 3 or 4 days.—Our Captain has fretted much at the blow this inflicts to our passage, this being the time he most relied on for getting on, and to-day is quite ill from his constant anxiety to see a breeze spring up. So are not we, for every day, after dinner, the boats are lowered down and we have the most delicious row in the calm moonlight, and have every pleasure of song, jest and race to make us reconciled to our detention. Did I not say rightly, Augusta, that you would enjoy being here, spite even of the description I yesterday wrote in too atrabilious a mood of the Cuddyian nymphs? But I have no time to re-touch the painting, for I have been driven to my pen this morning by the cry, ever pleasing and exciting on a path trackless as ours, of a sail. We see her plainly about 7 miles off, but there is a doubt whether she be a trader bound for dear England or a slaver on a far different errand. Denny once distinguished himself by capturing one, and taking it with 200 slaves into Sierra Leone, but as he spoilt his own voyage and got neither thanks nor reward for it, we shall probably leave our dubious friend alone,



unless she proves a true Briton. But the delightful sound of "homeward bound" has just been breathed in my ear by your friend Gregson, and, as even he has commenced an epistle to the loving Mrs. G., I trust that this paper will soon have the happiness of reaching my dear Augusta.

*October 11.*

Alas, Augusta, my hopes have proved false and the homeward bound proved a sulky Dutchman, who held on his churlish course without coming near us, which the wind enabled him to do, tho' it did not us. May he for this be condemned to wander on the deep as long as the Flying Dutchman, his countryman; tho' his bark may not be lost, yet may it be tempest tost, for with him has vanished all chance of sending letters home till we reach Calcutta. We crossed the line on the 1st October, and the occasion was fêted by the usual mythological procession of Neptune and his court, who went thro' the pageant with more than ordinary splendour. We, his new and numerous family, underwent with the best grace we could muster the introduction to our parent, who in his kind regard for our welfare recommended us to his Doctor—which latter immediately prescribes a course of shaving and bathing of the rudest description. The luckless initiate is seated upon a tub blindfold, overhanging an enormous sail filled with water—after a thousand kind enquiries about his health which accompany the shaving (wherein tar plays the part of lather, and an iron hook, wielded with real dexterity and gentleness, of a razor), the tub is suddenly removed, and two huge bears receive you in their arms and treat you to an effectual ducking. Nothing could exceed the picturesque effect of the pageant or the spirit with which the old God and his Court of Tritons and Mermaids played their parts. We, the male passengers, and all volunteered to submit to the ceremonials, which are usually remitted for a compensation, and delighted the honest, good-humoured tars by this addition to their sport. I gave a coat which Neptune's doctor figured in, and the lines in English Bards & Scotch R's will occur to you: "Lo, the struck eagle, etc."

Lat. 1°32 South, Long. 89 E.

*November 19, 1842.*

Since writing the above lines and since the last hope of sending them vanished, our good ship has sped over

many a hundred or rather thousand miles, and wafted us not only safely, but luxuriously thro' many a change of climate and season. We continued our South Westerly course till far South of the Cape, viz., about  $42^{\circ}$  South and  $28^{\circ}$  West, and caught a glimpse of the little Island of Tristan d'Acunha on the 18th Oct., being about the end of their winter, and a much colder winter than in the corresponding degree of North Latitude.—We have since held on an Easterly course with the rapidity of an arrow, and are now on the point of crossing the line a second time after one of the finest voyages ever known at this time of the year, and one of the greatest runs for 10 days ever heard of. We ran in that line nearly 2,600 knots, being more than 250 nautical miles and near 300 English miles a day. Indeed, our voyage has been the most propitious imaginable—very unromantic in point of danger, of which the most timid lady on board has never even dreamt, but favoured with the most delightful breezes and only checked by occasional calms. For the last four days we had been lying thus becalmed, having lost the noble breeze which sped us so well, and being in the calm latitudes the sailors had declared that nothing would rescue us from what they consider the torments of Tantalus save catching a shark, which to their delight they did this morning, and so, obedient to the omen, a delightful breeze has already sprung up and filled our sails, which now swell out proudly as tho' as tired of their long flapping as ourselves.—Since my last date we have not seen land nor any trace of humanity upon the waste of waters—for one or two days, old Ocean appeared to us in majesty of his ire, but it was very short-lived, and the ship weathered this gale so nobly that all save the sea-sick enjoyed the sight, which has become to me the most exhilarating I know, for I ever find my spirits are with the breeze. Never indeed, I believe, was a voyage performed with fairer weather or less discomfort.

Lat.  $20.7$  North, Long.  $88.33$ .  
*December 6.*

Our course is all but run, for to-morrow we expect to take on board the pilot at the Sandheads, who conducts us up the river, 2 or 3 days' sail to Calcutta. Were it not for the certainty that our arrival there will procure for us news of our dear friends in England, I should feel mournful rather than glad at the prospect—so far am I from being

tired with the voyage, or oppressed with a longing I hear many express for land.—The ship appears one of the last links that connect us with our country—the associations it presents will ever be dear to me, and sanguine as I am, it is difficult not to doubt whether my new home in the East will be one as happy as the home upon the deep we are all soon to leave, tho' I trust with deep humility that in a few years it may be so.—The doubt tho' that crosses one who has for three months enjoyed the freedom from anxiety, the absence of care for the morrow, which sea-life bestows, lest he should not prove true to himself upon resuming the duties and pursuits of active life, will, spite of one's efforts, force its way and qualify the pleasure of landing. However these doubts may be solved, it is certain that I shall ever look back to the period here passed with pleasant and grateful feelings, for the ship appears not as the instrument of exile, but as the friend who guides us to our duty and by the pleasantness of the path and kindness of his demeanour makes us forget that any doubts or difficulties lie in our way.—I cannot, with all this, help a little envying my brother John and his brother cadets (a nicer, more lighter-hearted set of youths never existed) who is to-day essaying for the first time his uniform which has just been got up from the hold preparatory to his being marched off to Fort William. To them the past is but a pleasant dream—the future, poor fellows, appears bright and glowing, and all look ardently to the end of the voyage, which they begin to regard as a impediment to their new career.

SAUGUR ROADS, MOUTH OF THE HOOGLY—AT ANCHOR.

*December 9.*

My predictions of near arrival have been realized, for early in the morning of the 7th we spied a sail ahead and bore down rapidly before the wind to her. We found her a brig at anchor, putting off a boat to us, so our Captain gave the word : “Shorten Sail,”—that little word and the minute which it took to effect the order, transported us at once into a new world from the far west to the eastern globe.—Hitherto we had carried our home with us, nothing had marked out to us the foreign nature of our track—the few ships we had seen had been spoken with in our native tongue—the very elements appeared to breathe

of old England. But the Captain's order, like an enchanter's wand, dispelled the illusion, for it brought to our sight a boat manned by 30 or 40 Lascars, in the light, picturesque garb of the East, and each apparently possessed of three voices, who paddled rapidly and skilfully from the brig to us and pointed out the course in which we should find the pilot. To him, a few hours more brought us the heart-stirring news of our success in Cabul and China and (what we had so long wished for) a file of newspapers. Most greedily, you may imagine, we devoured the tidings they contained—some with more anxiety than myself, for the husbands of two ladies were in China, and of one in Cabul, and Mrs. Ferguson, the lady I have, I think, before spoken of, learnt the painful tidings of the failure of her husband, who a year or two ago only had retired with the fortune of a prince, which he had been tempted a second time to jeopardy—but none with greater joy, for the papers were full of the praise of my friend and cousin, Richmond Shakespear, and I had again the happiness of listening with pride to the success of one who is to me like a brother. Of all men that I know he best deserves his success and would best appreciate such a tribute as the letter of thanks from the captives. The pilot immediately took charge of the ship which the captain gave up to him, thro' this, by far the most difficult navigation of the voyage. From the Sandheads, where we took the pilot, to Calcutta is a distance of about 130 miles, along which the ship is at every instant within a few feet, or more often a few inches, off sands that are perpetually shifting, and many a good ship which has gallantly rode out the tempest at sea founders, or is damaged when apparently at her journey's end. We learn to our delight—rather a selfish one, I must confess—that no vessels which had sailed within 200 days before us, had got in. Among those we had so distanced were the Vernon (the vessel on board of which we were in the dock) which sailed 10 days, and the Hardwicke which sailed a fortnight before us—both being vessels of the highest sailing character—for our voyage was dreadfully retarded by calms and headwinds all up the Bay of Bengal, thro' which we had to beat with constant tacks and at a very different rate from our former gallant runs. The current and breezes (a baffling North Monsoon) were so unfavourable that one day that we had logged (or run thro' the water) near 200



miles we had only advanced 20 in our course. But, with all this, we got from pilot to pilot in 95 days, a very rapid voyage for this season—the shortest voyage ever made in the summer, when the Southern Monsoon blows in the Bay, being 84—so we have every reason to be thankful and proud of our Prince. Great were our rejoicings on the night of the 8th. The state of the tide compels us to anchor every night till we reach Calcutta and a good part of the day too, but the sea voyage is reckoned as over on reaching the pilot. On that night we had a country *danse monstre* on board in which all hands joined—the captain figuring with the most ancient dame of the party. As we are anchored close to what is called the inner Floating Light, we were not surprised at receiving a visit from the captain of the brig which contains it, but we were surprised at seeing a very handsome, elegant, gentlemanly man whose only drawback was his being a little deaf. Great was the admiration of the ladies, sick as they were of their old cavaliers, and great was the desire that he should figure in the country dance; but this he declined. He had mistaken our ship for one of H.M.'s frigates and thereby delighted the Captain—by his curly moustaches he had captivated the ladies; in short, never did Corsair make such an impression as our Floating Light, who called us each down to the cuddy in the most affectionate manner to take one glass at parting—and I grieve to say completely quenched its light by the quantity of strong brandy and water with which he trimmed it, and alas! concluded by disgusting the ladies as much as he had at first fascinated them. We entertained serious apprehensions for his safety, as his boat moved off bearing him to his ship in the arms of his attendant lascars, spite of their assurances that he was in that state every night; but he relieved us from these on reaching the light-ship by discharging in the most frantic manner lights, blue, red and green and of every conceivable colour, which must have astonished and probably misled any vessel not like ourselves in the secret. It means that the poor wretch is a man of good connections who lost a more responsible situation by his miserable failing and has been removed here, as they supposed.

The next day, the 9th, at dinner we received the first detachment of private letters, and our table presented a



melancholy picture of the contrasts of grief and joy, which chequer life in every clime and at every season. Those first delivered you saw everyone tear open with the utmost impatience, and then tear them up with equal disgust. For we had all received circulars from a horse-dealer named Juggobundo Sen, who entreated our custom and volunteered horses and carriages to attend us.—While we were all laughing at our disappointment, a poor lady, Mrs. Loinsworth, who was going with two nice daughters to join her husband, the Inspector-General of Hospitals at Calcutta, learnt the news of his death, which had taken place a few days before we sailed. As he had only just been appointed from Madras, he had no friends in Calcutta, and the poor wife and girls who the night before had been in the highest spirits at the prospect of meeting their father after a long absence, will have to return as soon as possible to England, after all the anxiety and expense of their voyage with cruelly reduced means. Just as she had left the room in rushed her friend, Goad, a civilian, who had just received the most delightful account of his brother having most gallantly distinguished himself and obtained promotion in the Afghanistan campaign, and, almost wild with spirits, he read to us the account of his achievement. Alas! how little did we then anticipate the news in store for ourselves or think that the delightful voyage of which the above presents a few of the passages would be so sadly terminated. The sad tidings reached us in a letter from our dear cousin Marianne on the following day, Saturday, 10th—may Heaven bless her for the sweet kind sympathy with which she broke to us our bereavement—and on Sunday, 11th at 8 p.m. we anchored off the Cooley Bazar at Calcutta. We slept that night on board—at 7 the next morning, Major Irvine came for us and we set foot on land the first time for 102 days.

CALCUTTA, *December 26, 1842.*

The events of a sea-voyage are few and far between, as this imperfect record shows, and altho' it contains not one tithe of what we considered at the time events, yet when one tries on shore to recall and reduce to writing those unrecorded here, they either escape the memory or appear too trivial to deserve mention, tho' at the time they seemed replete with interest at which now one almost wonders.

One or two, however, of those which I have omitted, I will now retrace, the first a very sad one. We had on board 13 midshipmen, many of them very nice lads, but none so pretty or interesting as one little fellow of about 14 named Lister,<sup>1</sup> the least on board. Capt. Denny had filled up his complement of 12 midshipmen, but when the ship reached Portsmouth, there came on board a widow lady with this boy, her son, to entreat him to take the little fellow, who ought properly to have sailed with some other ship of Green's for his first voyage, but from Denny's well-known character for kindness and judgment she was most anxious to place the lad under his charge. He consented and the poor widow took a farewell, that was most heart-rending to see, from her pretty boy, just before the ship sailed. Well might she have doted on him, for he had one of the sweetest faces you can imagine, beautiful large wild black eyes and rosy cheeks. We all took great interest in him on account of his mother, and throughout the voyage he got on extremely well in learning his profession. But, alas! about 10 days before we reached Calcutta, one beautiful but dark night when we were all sitting on deck and the ship was running 9 or 10 knots, a report was made to the Captain that the poor lad must have fallen overboard—for the last thing that had been seen of him was his getting out of one of the ports, as was supposed, for his own amusement on his way up the rigging, and the other midshipmen did not miss him for near 20 minutes after. No splash was heard, nor anything to indicate that he was lost—no effort could have availed, for we must have been many miles off the spot where he fell without anything to indicate the spot in the ocean. We entertained all that night some hope that he might be found concealed about the ship; but, alas! it proved vain, and the most probable supposition is, that he had got out of the port in a state of drowsiness, so missed his footing! I need not say how mournful it made us all to think of the poor mother—none more than our Captain, who is as humane as he is able.

Among our amusements, I had almost forgotten to tell you of the most prominent and that which we for the time concentrated all our energies upon. You will guess that this was of a theatrical character. Our first attempt was "She stoops to conquer" in which I played old Hardecastle,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lister, son of the husband of Miss L'Etaing—sister of Mrs. Pattie.

my brother John, Sir Charles Marlow, a clever conceited cadet, named Beeddle, Sir Tony Lumpkin, & other cadets the ladies. It may be vanity, but I think the play has seldom been received with greater applause or produced more genuine laughter on any boards than on those of the Prince of Wales. I wish you could have seen the pretty picturesque theatre, the sailors, under Gregson's instructions, prepared for us on deck. It contained as audience every one of the 300 souls, men, women and children we had on board, and the arrangement of flags, sails, etc., made it seem as if it had sprung up by magic.

I must record one other day's sport, viz. 27th October, when we were not far west of the Cape as you imagine, but had sped on our course as far as  $30^{\circ}$  E. Long. or some 5 degrees east of the Cape, and  $39^{\circ}$  S. Lat. or some 5 degrees south of it. Numerous albatrosses were flying about in our wake, so we lowered a boat and rowed into the midst and shot 24 large albatross—2 Mother Carey's chickens—(it's a sign of bad luck to shoot them, but of good shooting, for they are very difficult to hit)—2 whale birds (a very pretty bluish bird with azure beak and legs) and plenty of Cape hen and pigeons. There was a slaughter for you. The albatross is a noble bird, with an immense spread of wing—the largest measured 15 feet from tip to tip. One fine fellow, who had witnessed the slaughter of his companions, came swimming up to meet us, and really he looked like some gallant warrior prepared to do battle single-handed against a host of foes, for he looked us each by turns in the face and seemed to bid us one and all defiance—we spared him for his gallantry and long did he follow our boat as we rowed off, within an oar's length of us, looking as majestic and as dauntless as King Roderick when he looked for the brave captains who had led the hosts of Spain, whose bodies we were bearing along in our boat, which they almost weighed down.

I and one or two others acquired a great reputation for our rowing on board—and the Captain used to offer many a bet that, with three others he should name, we should beat any other four. Our fair fame remained undisputed till the day of the Floating Light, when, having taken on board a cargo of fair ladies, we were beaten by another crew not so laden, and afterwards when we, burning to revenge our defeat, started on a regular race with our opponents

(leaving our fair burden at home) to the floating light and back, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in all—we kept ahead beautifully the whole way there and round, but in coming back, the other boat was steered so as to get the advantage of the current which we lost, caught us up just under the bows of our own ship—and, as we were struggling for dear life, my oar struck against the cable by which the ship was enclosed, almost upset the boat—and gave us the mortification of beholding our adversaries shoot by us and win the race, amidst the shouts of our friends on the ship. So ended my boating achievements—in defeat, but not in despair. . . .

### *To his Mother*

PRINCE OF WALES, *October 25, 1842.*

Our captain has realized all my expectations of him, the most kind-hearted man I ever met, of a most simple, unaffected humour, one of the best seamen in reputation, and (what will recommend him to you more than other commendation) with the good taste to have taken a liking to your eldest son, who is very proud to be a favourite with a man so much beloved himself. Upon all after-dinner occasions he appears, as he describes it, by counsel, and, under the pleasing retainer of his Champagne, I, his Attorney General, am ever ready to celebrate a birthday, or propose a health. Tho' we do not encounter much variety of incidents, we do of clime and of the aspect of sea and sky—that of the latitudes of Madeira thro' which we sailed from the 6th till we got about five days ago into the Tropics is the most heavenly that imagination can picture. Among the many places claiming the honour of being the “Islands of the blest” of the ancients, Madeira has surely the strongest title—a sky of the most lovely hue, a sea rivalling it in depth of blue, and beauty—a breeze bearing with it a soothing influence that forbids anything human to be unhappy—so fresh and yet so soft—a line of mountains rising immediately from the sea to the height of 4,000 feet, of a colour so transparent, so dream-like that you can scarce think you are gazing on reality, and studded with little spots of dazzling brightness, like stars in the blue heavens, which are the white houses shining in the sun. . . .



*To his Mother*

CALCUTTA, December 12, 1842.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . I saw poor uncle Charles yesterday and was astonished to find him looking so well, tho' he has been lately indisposed, I should have known and recognized his face and voice, which bear a great resemblance to those of your family. He was in excellent health and spirits, gave me a hearty welcome, talked not only naturally but most agreeably, so much so, that an hour and a half spent with him passed by like one half hour, but with this I fear he is in bad circumstances—he maintains himself principally by writing for a paper; and his existence here seems almost forgotten by his former colleagues. He did not allude to his circumstances or family out here nor to my prospects, so that neither of these subjects did I introduce on the *tapis*. I was much struck with the happy, easy flow of his wit, which reminded me much of your own, my dearest mother. Lord Ellenborough is now a great way off—at Ferozepore, where he is holding great military parades and making a great Tamáshá (the word here is used for a grand military display) in which I trust Sir Richmond will figure. He, Lord Ellenborough, is universally spoken of with anything but respect, and has acquired the title of the mountebank of the Sutlej, in which I have heard both Major Irvine and Sir Lawrence Peel acquiesce. The justice of the name I fear he but too well deserves.

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, January 19, 1843.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

. . . Among the new competitors there are few very formidable; here, as in England, to get once into favourable notice is to pave the way to a handsome income, and the opportunities of getting into notice are, I think, far greater and earlier than at home.—The judges have all been very friendly, particularly Sir Lawrence Peel,<sup>1</sup> who is chief as well in rank as in talents, attainments and benevolence. He has given me great encouragement to bear patiently the delays of first getting into practice, and gives me much

<sup>1</sup> Sir Lawrence Peel, a nephew of Sir Robert's, was Chief Justice from 1842 to 1855.



hope if I can once do so. And this, I hope, will encourage my dear friends at home as it did me. He has had unfortunately very bad health, but is now recovering, to the joy of all, for he is much and deservedly beloved. In person he is plain, and unassuming; in manners, he is as kind and agreeable in private as he is able on the Bench, and in him I hope to have a good friend, which I am sure will be a stronger reason for your liking him than anything else I can add in his praise. One thing, however, should strongly recommend him to all ladies, that tho' a bachelor he gives the greatest and pleasantest balls in Calcutta. We were at one a short time since which unfortunately occasioned him a relapse, as he was just recovering from a severe fall from his horse. He is now, however, much better.—I forgot to tell you, in my enumeration of the advantages of the Calcutta Bar, that the fees (when you can get them) are nearly three times as high as those at home. I have become quite mercenary, you see, but you know the cause and will forgive. To finish telling you at once all the *events* that have happened to me in this last month, know that Mrs. Halliday, a sister of my mother's whom I have never seen, has had the generosity to give me £100 and to John £50—that John has gone for a while to do duty with one of the nicest regiments and under one of the best Colonels in the service—the 1st Infantry and Col. Benson at Barrackpore, 16 miles off Calcutta. He will probably have to join some other regiment many hundred miles up the country in a few months, but as the trump of war is now silent, his future distinction is not a matter of so much interest as it would have been. He is exulting in a horse given him by a cousin, as you will be glad to hear I am also—for this very day has Col. Low, about whom I will tell you more anon, given me a strong and handsome bay steed, which will figure both in my buggy (a gift also from the Irvines) and under my weight (nearly the only thing that I can call my own except by gift). Let me add that both John and I are enjoying a delightful cool climate, the pleasantest family party in the world (*bien entendu*, of this Eastern world of mine only do I speak), and excellent health and spirits and unbounded appetites, and then let me hurry off to the West and transport myself to you and the dear circle about you. . . .

How kind of you to have preserved so well in your

memory all that passed a year before you were writing—believe me that I remember it as well, and that I was charmed to find every incident recorded by you accord so exactly with my recollections—ah, they were indeed happy days, not only those we passed at Boulogne, but those one of us at least enjoyed whenever fate brought us together. . . .

Now let me introduce you, as I long to do, to some of the large family gathering, which now gladdens the hospitable home of the Irvines. These I have already made known to you, and will add no more than that their kindness is still unbounded and would of itself prevent any impatience on my part to grow a rich man and leave them. Next come Col. and Mrs. Low, who are on their way to England—she is your namesake, Augusta, and somewhat resembles you in sweetness of disposition. They have long held one of the finest appointments in India—that of resident at the Court of Oude, and have been used to quite a royal residence and state, and almost a princely power among the community about them. Never were people less spoiled by high position—they are both the most warm-hearted, unaffected persons you can imagine, and one knows not whether to admire more the cheerfulness with which they have given up their noble income without a sigh of regret for the splendours they leave behind, or the similarity of disposition which leads them both to prefer comparative obscurity with their children at home to all the incidents of much-respected rank which this country afforded them. No man in India is more esteemed than he or goes home more respected—for he combines the soundest judgment and finest determination with the mildest manners and unbounded courtesy and benevolence. The exercise of the latter (which in an address to him by the whole Christian community of Oude is styled, the liberality of a prince) which will prevent, I fear, the carrying home of the large fortune which he might have accumulated had he not thought that Providence had intended the depositories of wealth to be the dispensers of bounty; but they retire to a small paternal estate of his in Scotland with many a blessing invoked upon them which their own dispositions more than any external circumstance is sure to realize. You will smile at my glowing eulogies on the giver of my steed (whom by the bye I have named after the

capital where he resided, so that I shall not only be in Luck-now, but on Lucknow—forgive me an outbreak of the old vile spirit), but he deserves far more. In him and Irvine are two fine specimens of the men to whose qualities we have owed our ascendancy in the East, and I cannot help thinking that if those who first established it had united the good and kind qualities of these men to their own strength of mind, this great empire would have been spared much of its misery. The last two Governor Generals—Lords William Bentinck and Auckland—were both excellent men, and by their combination of humanity with firmness have conferred infinite benefits on the native population—the latter indeed committed one error in military policy by invading Cabul, but has left behind him a name much beloved and very different from that which the present Governor will ever earn—the latter has been more over-rated at home than any man ever sent out. I know not what the opinion of him in England now is, but here all orders of men, however various their political feelings, condemn the over-weening self-confidence of his conduct. An instance of this which has excited much comment here has been the following: Among the other rejoicings to commemorate our late successes in Cabul (of which not one particle of credit is due to him, as he was as near as possible frustrating the measures which his predecessor had laid for repairing the disasters there), he ordered in a magnificent proclamation that certain gates belonging to an Hindoo Temple at Somnáth, which 800 years ago had been removed by the Mahommedan invaders to some immense distance, should be restored—the manifesto was a bombastic imitation of some of Napoleon's statutes—that the insult of 800 years should be wiped out, and the order ran that these gates should at every post thro' which they passed be escorted by some of the most distinguished troops in the campaign, the highest military honours would be paid them. . . . Well, the Hindus, poor people, in whose honour this was done, have quite forgotten, as you may imagine, the Musalman impertinence of 800 years back and for which they cared no more than for the flood. The population of the place is more than one half Mahommedans, who feel dreadfully insulted by this gratuitous revival of antedeluvian grievances, and the Temple of Somnáth itself, from which the gates were

carried, has, it now turns out, long since ceased to exist. The truth of the matter probably is that his lordship probably had read in some *Gazeteer* that at a certain place were some sandalwood gates which tradition said had been carried away, and without consulting anybody or pausing to inquire into the truth of the story, he gave this ridiculous order. But I have promised to introduce you to my family here, and not to Governor Generals—but fear I must postpone my description of George Shakespear,<sup>1</sup> a fat, shy, eccentric, but most witty, entertaining old fellow, and Selina, the youngest of the family, a sweet, interesting girl of 21. The Crawfords, who came out by the *Hindustan*, complete our party, but we expect Sir Richmond, who is going to take his furlough, I think, attracted by some lady fair, whom he met when last at home. With all this I need scarcely say how pleasant are our evenings at home. Those abroad are also agreeable, though not always devoid of dullness. Dinner parties there are without end; one I ~~am~~ going to to-night at Government House at eight o'clock (just as absurd an hour here as at home), for our nights set in soon after six. There have been three balls since I have been here, two of which I could have much wished you to see, and I have three more in store, one given by a grateful client to a friend and brother barrister—Leith—a very agreeable fellow and the most successful among us. Though but a young man, that is 36, he is making a fine fortune. . . .

### *To his Mother*

*February 10, 1843.*

I enjoy much the society of Calcutta, and have met some agreeable acquaintances. It is on a less formal footing than the intercourse of English people usually is—and although the dinner parties are still more stately and enormous in point of numbers, twenty five frequently sitting down, I think in the proportion of two out of three they are very agreeable. As Geare says, if I could get as many briefs as I do dinners I should soon be in a very

<sup>1</sup> George Trant, elder brother of Richmond's, of the Bengal Civil Service, "Very clever and witty, but shy." Committed suicide in Paris in 1844. My father had to break the news to the Irvines.



thriving condition. Last week we purposed to have more of the Lows' society, and refused no less than four parties and moreover went to two dinner parties I could not well refuse and two Balls—*qu'en dites-vous, mesdames?* One of the balls was at Dwarka Náth Tagore's the great Hindoo, who has just returned from having being fêted by half the sovereigns of Europe and her of England—and whose character is worth noticing.

I passed two very pleasant days on a visit at Sir J. Grant's, one of the judges here, who took me down on Saturday evening and brought me back on Monday—at a beautiful place called Fitaghur, sixteen miles from Calcutta—and delightfully situated on the river, which is really a very noble one. It is close to Barrackpore, so I went over to see John and brought him to dine at the hospitable judge's. The Park and Government House at Barrackpore are beautiful, and John has every day some of the prettiest walks and rides you can imagine. The river flows through the Park, and on the opposite bank stands the pretty little Danish settlement of Serampore, which still retains its nationality and its Governor, and stands quite isolated from the world without it. Sir John is a most agreeable companion, being an old Parliamentary man, and intimate with all the old Whigs, in whose cause he spent a fine fortune in contesting elections—and none can be more friendly than he. Interesting arrivals are taking place every day, some from China, others from Afghanistan, and the sufferers in the latter are now reaping a full harvest of compliments and entertainments. An interesting young man, Major Macgregor, dined with us yesterday; he was the right hand of Sale during the heroic resistance at Jellalabad, and it is said it was at his advice that General Pollock would not withdraw the troops when ordered by Lord Ellenborough to do so, which would have been a fatal measure, as it would have destroyed all hope of recovering the captives except on dishonourable and oppressive terms, or retrieving the British name. On this account Lord Ellenborough owes him a grudge, and when entertaining at a grand banquet the illustrious garrison, as they are called, he proposed the health of nearly every officer save Macgregor. When he had passed him over in a very marked manner, old General Sale sprung up, as bold before the Governor General as before the enemy, and said that

the name of one of the most gallant officers then present had been omitted, he therefore must pledge the officer to whose services both in the cabinet and in the field he had been throughout most indebted. This was responded to most enthusiastically by all except the Governor General, who must have felt much humiliated.

Do you, dear Jane, remember our seeing one nice pleasant day we went to the Zoological Gardens together a tall, plethoric, thin-legged bird which excited our laughter? You thinking him like an old butler, I like an old nobleman addressing the House of Lords in favor of the Corn Laws—such a bird is visible upon the top of nearly every lofty building in Calcutta. As I passed by Government House to-day I saw one of our old friends standing on one leg with nearly the same oratorical, uncomfortable gesture, on each of the three statues that adorn the Lords' House,<sup>1</sup> as it is called, *the Adjutant*, and little did I think when and where I should renew an acquaintance so happily commenced.

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, February 16, 1843.

You see I have again delayed writing until the last day and shall tell you the only cause (and that I scarcely acknowledge to myself) of my procrastination. It is caused, I think, by the hope that each day's postponement will give me an additional chance of being enabled to tell you that I have laid some slender foundation for my (mayn't I say, *our?*) fortune by a successful appearance in Court; but, alack! the last inevitable day of posting has arrived and I have still to tell you the same doleful tale of the hopes deferred and long but silent sittings of your yet briefless Counsellor. With the exception of some business I have been engaged in for my friend, Capt. Denny, which did not appear at Court, and which, of course, I undertook without the handsome fee he offered, I have hitherto had no employment, tho' daily buoyed up with the prospect of it.—Do not let this damp your spirits, dearest, in reading the rest of this letter, for tho' if you do you will afford me the best justification for my delaying to write till I could give a different tale, I would not purchase your forgiveness at such a price, especially as my want of justice has not had

<sup>1</sup> Government House.

that effect on me. I know not whether it be my sanguine nature, or any more solid reason, but I cannot but think, spite of the want of appreciation of my transcendent merits by the attorneys here, that I have far more to hope for here than at home, and that eventually the step will prove as good as the sacrifice in making it was great. I will think, with Hotspur, "the plot's a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation," tho' I must own that the large and rapid fortune-making days at this bar are now no more. But tho' I cannot hope to rival my friend Morton<sup>1</sup> here in fortune, he came out 5 or 6 years since, leaving, as I do, his heart behind him. Last year, after four years' absence, his true love joined him, and in the last twelve months he has made at the bar £6,000. . . . Independently of the interest their story has for me, they both are charming people (he not yet thirty) and present the picture of as happy a ménage as any in Calcutta; so Esperance be our motto. . . . By far the most brilliant man here is Turton, who, luckily for the rest of us, has for some months given up the Bar for the lucrative office of Registrar. He is really a man of commanding ability as well as a most agreeable companion. . . . I must, I think, have told you of an unfortunate uncle of mine who came out here (Charles Thackeray) with the best prospects and highest talents, but prostituted them to the debasing vice of drink. He still lives—never comes into Court, and has astonished me by retaining, after 17 such years as he has led in such a climate, so much vigour and intellect and such a happy flow of wit that is still really brilliant. . . . We must go on expecting hotter weather, but at present nothing can be more delightfully genial than the temperature, which is something like some of the fine June days we have passed together, tho' the midday sun is not to be braved with the same impunity. The interior of the houses is admirably managed for the exclusion of that luminary, whom you at home court as a friend but whom we repel as our worst enemy. They all have a broad verandah supported with columns to the south, which is sometimes as wide as the largest room in the house and prevents his rays from penetrating. At all the parties here, all doors and windows being open, and the rooms at least twice as lofty as those in the most stately London houses, one is quite struck with the coolness,

<sup>1</sup> Father of General Sir Gerald Morton, K.C.B.

which contrasts very pleasantly with the squeeze of an English ball-room. . . .

Short as has been my stay in Calcutta, I have already felt a pang which usually only attaches to a long residence in a place or long intercourse with the objects of it. I mean the pain of parting from friends in whose society one had found much to charm, and of whom one is sure deeply to regret the loss—I allude particularly to the departure of my kind friends and cousins the Lows and George Shakespear, who went by the India steamer on the 10th last intending to pass some time in Egypt and some on the continent on their way home. . . .

*February 17, morning.*

The town of Calcutta itself is close and crowded, but on the south side of it there extends an immense open plain stretching down to the river, and many miles in extent—round this and about it are the residences of nearly all the principal Europeans, each surrounded with a garden and built in a light Italian or Doric style; the effect of them is very cheerful and picturesque. The district in which they stand is called Chowringhee. You will be glad to hear that the Hoogly, of which we used to entertain such mean anticipations, is a noble river, the banks of which from Calcutta upwards are beautiful, tho' the first entrance of it is not inviting. There are many pleasant settlements for English families on its banks—Garden Reach, just above Calcutta, is adorned by many a handsome house and English-looking lawn at the very water's edge. Below are Cossipore, Fitaghur, and Barrackpore, all beautifully situated. To one or the other of these I often get out on the Saturday evening and enjoy the pleasures of the country till Monday morning (rivalling our uncle in his Combe expeditions). One of these visits was a very pleasant one to Sir J. Grant's,<sup>1</sup> a judge of the S. Court and a very pleasant, hospitable old gentleman. Another was to the celebrated Dwarka Náth Tagore's, who has returned loaded with the presents and favours of half the potentates of Europe. His character is a very singular one, and tho' somewhat a riddle, may be thus roughly sketched. Endowed with the characteristic subtlety and acuteness

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Peter Grant (1774—1848), Chief Justice of Calcutta, M.P., Puisne Judge of Bombay, 1827, afterwards of Calcutta.



of the Hindoo, he has combined with it the energy and fixity of purpose of the Englishman and a thirst for knowledge (political and social) which is truly European. These qualities he has so long made subservient to his own interest that from small beginnings he has become the lord of a fortune which few English nobles can rival. His quick observation, and the opportunities which were afforded to his penetrating inquisitiveness in Europe, render him an amusing and instructive companion. He has ceased to believe the mummery of the Gentoo,<sup>1</sup> as indeed have most of the educated among them, without having substituted any other creed—and tho' he thus far resembles the Romans of the days of Cicero, the Hindoo inquisitiveness on all material points has none of the noble thirst and curiosity for discovering the truth which rendered the Roman as nearly a Christian as perhaps without the aid of revelation was possible. His house is exquisitely sumptuous, built in Eastern style and filled with works of art both of Europe and his native country—there you see the Venus de Medici by the side of a wife of his earlier days, a lovely picture, and a Madonna and child given him by the Pope next a festival in honour of Brahma—the alabaster vases of Italy blended with the ivory of Delhi. He gave there one of the greatest balls of the season, and his brilliantly illuminated gardens presented quite a scene of fairy-land, or of Vauxhall, the less poetical but more intelligible and true comparison. A propos of illuminated balls, the invitation to one we have been to to-day ran thus: "To celebrate the successes of the British arms in Asia, Col. Powny at home." Is not the bathos beautiful? tho', to the jolly little Colonel who issued the stupendous announcement, it must have appeared sufficient to console for all the disasters that had preceded the successes in question. Besides the Lows, I have sustained another loss that causes me some regret in the "Prince of Wales," which sailed on the 7th February, bearing in her several whose honest faces and friendly feelings I shall miss much. It seemed, as I foresaw, like the severing of the last link that bound me to dear England and to you, Augusta, and at daybreak in the morning she sailed I stood on the high forecastle where you may remember you all ascended while yet

<sup>1</sup> The old word for Hindoo, taken from the Portuguese. Dwarka Náth Tagore was an adherent of the Brahma Somaj.

incomplete, and tho' the anchor was heaving up and all was hustle around, conjured up before me the ever-to-be-loved scene of our visit there together, and every incident connected with that day that so happily sealed our fate. I thought it a good omen that, even at the last moment, I could see in my mind's eye your figure as you stood there leaning over towards the ship's head. . . .

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALOUTTA, March 18, 1843.

. . . It is certainly a country where a little talent and considerable perseverance go a great way, but there are many temptations to go out of the straight path one has proposed to oneself, and to embark one's abilities (not a large fortune it must be said) in channels that promise splendid results. I have already had one specious offer made me of becoming the Editor of one of the best newspapers here, for which I have written one or two things, and the proprietor of which offered me 600 rupees a month, or £700 per annum, if I would undertake it, and give up three or four hours a day only to it. But, however tempting the prospect of immediate income to one who had not then made a shilling by his profession here, I declined it without hesitation, as any notoriety that I should have acquired by it must have been prejudicial to my success in my profession and could lead to nothing that would compensate for this. As I have acted so genteely by my profession, don't you think it ought to return me the compliment, and show me that the civilities between us are not always to be on one side only? I am determined, at all events, that my suit shall not fail through the want of constancy of the wooer.

One of the Scottish kirk ministers, named Dr. Charles, whom I have seen a good deal of in private, far surpasses in talent, learning and attainments any of his reverend brethren. His sermons would attract me but for the affection which I bear to our own beautiful form of worship, the unaffected tenderness and poetry of which contrasts very strongly with the colder, more reasoning form of prayer adopted by the Scots.

Far from blaming the present administration<sup>1</sup> for the change of measures and opinions, I hail it as the triumph achieved by the struggles of our party; but I do blame them for refusing all credit to their former opponents, whose views they formerly impeded, and have now adopted. I do blame them for arrogating to themselves the merit of reforms which for a long course of years they struggled desperately to resist. And though I admit that the present Whig party in many instances shows a narrowness in its opposition, which I regret to say savours too much of desire for place, I cannot forget that it is to their efforts for the last 80 years that we owe nearly all the mild and civilized improvement which has purged from our laws so much of unequal and of cruel, that they scarcely ever were allowed the gratification of carrying out these improvements themselves, but saw them brought in by the very men who had been most bitter in opposing them, and who, constrained at last by the voice of common sense, claimed for themselves exclusively the merits of them. Those reap the harvest that have not borne the toil and heat of the day—nay, that have multiplied a hundredfold the toils of their forerunners in the labour. And then the paltry excuse is made by many that an old Whig is a modern Conservative. Was Sir R. Peel an old Whig? Read his speeches from 1812 to 1828, and see if there is a single principle of liberal Government which he now so proudly relies on that he has not in them attacked and denounced. He has been the greatest reformer of the day, in the sense of carrying through the House the most beneficial measures—Catholic emancipation, and mitigation of our Criminal Code. But when these were advocated, as they were hopelessly but unweariedly by the Whigs, was his voice raised in their favour? And when at last these boons were given by him, did the country owe them to him who recognized their merit only when compelled, or to those who for half a century had maintained a struggle for them against gradually diminishing majorities, upon whom he threw the burthen but denied the fame? Sir Samuel Romilly passed his life in advocating, with the most convincing arguments and a constancy that only grew with defeat, and with an utter abnegation of self, two (out of many) measures, the benefit of which now appears so palpable

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Peel and a Conservative Ministry were in power, 1841–6.

that a child could not make it clearer and that the hottest Tory now would not dare dispute. One of these measures was the reform of our horrible and bloody criminal code, which to read now almost makes an unsqueamish lawyer shudder. The other was placing the landed property of a debtor on the same footing as his personal property liable to the payment of his debts. During his life he met with the fiercest opposition and obloquy.

*To his Mother*

*March 18, 1843.*

I continue to like my new brethren of the bar here very much. They are in the main pleasant, well-informed, tho' not generally brilliant men, and a good deal of gentlemanly feeling pervades our Society. There is not indeed the same stirring interest about our profession here as that which is found in England even when unemployed,—but as I hope that ere long I may become an actor as well as a spectator on the boards of litigation, the drama will acquire an interest as agreeable and more beneficial than that at home. Occasionally there are trials of much interest, but it is a painful thing to see perjury so uniformly the habit on both sides that you are nearly always obliged to form your judgment upon the probabilities of the case without a reference to the facts, however stoutly sworn to. It is not as at home, where, the instant you detect a perjury in any one part of a suitor's case, you make up your mind that the whole is a fabrication, but here the poor wretches frequently, with the justice of the case and the evidence of it on their side, not contented with this, produce some witnesses to prove a fact which could not probably have happened, and which could not have bettered their plea, if it had, but which they consider of paramount importance. On this account, in all criminal cases the responsibility of the judge becomes a very painful one, as he has almost invariably to decide, perhaps in a matter of life and death, between two conflicting hosts of witnesses, both of whom have come, not to depose to what they have really seen, but to support their friend's cause, in which it is wonderful to see how conveniently they supply any gap they think wanting.

I think I told you Mr. Langslow had written a very kind



letter to Turton here about me. The latter has great influence among the attorneys, and could, and I daresay would, have helped me much with them, but unfortunately he has a nephew already at the bar here and expects shortly another. He is a singularly agreeable man and is very kind and friendly to me, but his moral conduct with regard to his wife, although he had the worthy patriarch Jacob for his example, was as infamous and as indefensible as could be. He has an immense family by the offending sister, who died about two years ago, and he has now married a third time a young and good-natured woman whom one cannot much respect for taking such a man, tho' he is so specious that one cannot feel surprised at his winning a woman, notwithstanding the slur upon his character.

Did I tell you of a little adventure which occurred to me, soon after arriving, but which I am told is of such frequent occurrence as scarce to deserve repeating? I was driving to dinner alone in Col. Low's carriage with hack horses and driver, when just as we reached the Amphitryon's door (a little late), I felt and heard a tremendous crash accompanied with loud cries. On looking out I found we had run over a palanquin, the inmate of which was in vain endeavouring to emancipate himself, and the four bearers were scattered on the ground, one of them to all appearance senseless and giving no signs of life. I exclaimed in English to know if any hurt was done, but before I could receive an answer, even if they had understood me, the coachman had turned the horses' heads and was galloping off at a furious rate in the opposite direction from that we were taking before. My remonstrances were in vain; in his anxiety to elude the pursuit he turned every corner that presented itself, and finally, after a circuit of about two miles, returned to the house of festivity by a different approach from that he took before. However, when arrived, Palkee-bearers and all had disappeared. I told the story to mine hosts, spite of my doubt whether one of the convives would start up and proclaim himself the injured individual who had added such insult to injury—but though we sent out to inquire, we heard nothing more of the disaster, from which I should infer that the poor wretch was more frightened than hurt by the fall. I looked with some fear into the next day's newspapers for fear that I should see a statement of a lawyer just imported who had practised this device,

knowing well that it was his only means of escape from the penalties of the law. But in all things this recklessness of human life among the natives is very great. A boat upsets in the river; no hand is stretched out to help the unfortunates, three or four in number, who sink immediately, while hundreds flock to the bank to watch the spot where the hay with which it is loaded is likely to float on shore. All this proceeds less from a want of humanity than from a fatalism which makes them think there is no use of resisting or deploring when a man's hour is come.

The festivities have been great in honour of the troop from China—and John will give you an account of the Barrack-pore ball, which crowned the series of fêtes in celebration of them. The grand one was at the Government House, where the deputy Governor,<sup>1</sup> who is only second in the world to the Governor General, presided. There is a ludicrous likeness betwixt him and a Mr. Patrick, a good-humoured, but not so dignified an individual, who is a partner of a thriving business of Auctioneers. On the night of the ball, just as the bird was spreading his plumage to receive Sir Hugh, and looking more like the peacock than any other winged thing, a well-meaning but blundering old gentleman, who in age and in size made a worthy match for the other two, thinking he saw Patrick his equal, slapt the great bird violently on the back, exclaiming, "Why, old boy, how like you are to old Bird!" "*I am* old Bird, Sir," was the stern reply, whereby the great man paralysed the unfortunate. Not the poachers who, seeing a shabby man advance on Lord Eldon's estate, exclaimed, "Here comes one of old Baggs himself," ever felt their souls sink into their hobnailed shoes more effectually than the abashed Doctor as he sank into his pumps. But the great man has been kind to me, and I have more than once enjoyed his hospitality.

We, the Calcutta Bar, have some thoughts of petitioning the Government to allow us to plead in the Sudder Court, or superior Court of Appeal from all the native courts, in which civilians act as judges. The pleadings are now in Bengalee, and though the causes are some of immense importance, and large as are the interests involved, the persons who are entrusted with the conduct of them are men who have no qualifications for the most part, save a proficiency

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bird.

in the language. The natives who, I am happy to say, have more confidence in the Bench and Bar, independent as we are of the Company, than in its servants as a body, would be pleased to have the pleadings in English, in which case we should claim the right of preaudience over the other pleaders. Common sense seems to say that a body of men qualified by education, and above all suspicion as to integrity, and in the habit of practising the same laws as the Hindoos and Mahommedans in their own Courts, and possessing the confidence of the suitors, would give a greater respectability to the Company's Courts than the present pleaders, who are generally men who have failed in their undertakings and come to this as a last resource. But it is a common observation at home that a bad judge dreads an intelligent bar, and an able judge is assisted by it. And it appears our application will meet with strong opposition from the present judges of the Sudder Court, men of high standing, who for the most part are called from duties incompatible with the study of the law, to administer it in its most delicate and complicated stage, that of Appeals, who seldom take the trouble of delivering their reasons for their judgment, malice says *pour cause*. To men of unjudicial habits of thought, the thorough canvassing that all their opinions is subjected to by an independent bar, cannot but be irksome, and I daresay that in time they may seem so for us. Some of the judges form exceptions, and really show much impartiality, sound reasoning, and anxiety to decide in a judicial way. Among these I am glad to say is Abercrombie Dick,<sup>1</sup> the brother of Mr. Dick, whom I have not seen as he is now in Darjeeling, but who bears a high character as an able judge, even among our brotherhood, unused as we are to flatter the law of any save Lawyers. But he is generally in a minority in all doubtful questions, and probably will be so in this. As there is some prospect of a remodelling in a few years, both of the Supreme and Sudder Courts—and uniting them—it will be important to us to get a footing in the latter before the change comes.

There has been, as the papers will tell you, a great and decisive victory won at Hyderabad with great gallantry by Sir Charles Napier—a distinguished name both by sea and land. He is a cousin of the Commodore. This will pro-

<sup>1</sup> Abercrombie Dick continued to be a Judge of the Sudder Court till 1856.

bably close hostilities in India for many a long day, to your delight, but John's sorrow. He seems getting on very well with the language, and still likes *la vie militaire*.

To conclude merrily, I will tell you another silly story that I have just been giving to Blanche Trimmer. It is a pendant to the former one.—A powerful and rich native named Mati Lal Seal, a rival of Dwarka Náth's, and a successful rascal, is establishing a Hindoo College, which he has placed in the care of the Jesuits.<sup>1</sup> I went to an inaugural meeting there, and found the S. Courts, rather great people, with a great crowd of fathers, but none of the Government. The Jesuit President was in the most effective passage of his eloquent exordium when a murmur ran thro' the crowd, "Make way for the Deputy Governor." "Here comes Bird; how kind!" "Have the goodness to pause for Mr. Bird." The speaker did pause, which he would have done for few interruptions, and well-pleased eyes looked to the approach along which Jesuits and Babus sped in ushering the condescending great. The Bishop Apostolic surrendered the great chair, all were on the tiptoe of expectation, when from the crowd the portly and bowing form at last issued and displayed, smiling, the features of—*Patrick* (the Deputy Governor's double).

### *To his Mother*

CALCUTTA, April 30, 1843.

. . . Lastly for Carlyle's book. He is a strange, fantastic man of genius about whom opinion has been much divided between enthusiastic admirers and those who deny him any merit. Both I think are wrong, and for the reasons you give. My judgment of him is that there are in all his works passages and ideas of wonderful truth and force, but that they are mixed up with a vast deal which is not of the same real coin, but which, having the same stamp and ring, passes with his admirers and with himself too as sterling. He loses himself in his metaphysics, and is greatest when his native strength of mind strikes upon some great truth which he views in a new and startling light. In fact I think him a great writer, spite of his metaphysics, and not through them—a heresy, I know, advanced by one who does not know one tittle of them, and therefore is

<sup>1</sup> St. Xavier's College.



not competent to pronounce a judgment. But I am rather confirmed in my view by having met him once, and took a long walk with him, during which we conversed on an infinite number of subjects; and a more practical, strong, unadorned common sense than he showed in conversation I have never met with. I liked him much then and have since looked upon him as one whom education, metaphysics and flattery had failed to spoil, though they had enticed him into some [illegible] habits. Of his "Heroes," I have only read Mahommed, which I like much; his French Revolution is wild, but strangely interesting, and the above opinion of his character applies particularly to that.

You ask about my mode of spending the day here, and I do not believe that I have yet given the details, because in fact I feel them to be so flat and uninteresting that I *gain* in your interest by not telling them. Know that I rise about six (I am sorry to say more often after than before), walk on the housetop for a quarter of an hour, then work with Munshee till half past eight, bathe, dress and breakfast at 9, office at 10, Court (when it sits) at 11 and remain at office till 6.30, drive or walk, dine at 7.30 or 8, and when at home to bed at 10. That last I find to be the great point—having done that the night before, I feel in better health than in Europe, with a delightful elasticity of mind and limb the whole day. I have not told you yet of the climate in the merry month of May—to me it is *delightful* still—though it is on the average the hottest month in the year. In the day-time, i.e. from 10 to 6, you cannot put out your head with much comfort or profit. . . .

*To Charlotte*

*May 8, 1843.*

A far greater loss than that of the climate is that of all the dear associations of Europe. I speak not, however, of the tender ties that unite us to the beloved friends we have left behind, but to the everyday associations which at home one scarcely notes. The bonny white faces one used to meet in a brisk walk thro' the streets, whether belonging to fat citizen or gay damsel, the shop windows, the cab-stands, and a dozen other of these little *divertissements* to the mind or body, now become quite clear to the recollec-

tion. Not that I do not enjoy all that is new and picturesque in oriental life, but "I love Rome more." So far, however, from mine being a feeling of sadness at having lost all this, it is rather one of self-complacency at having enjoyed them so much when within my reach. I often think how disgusted I should be with myself if I had no more knowledge of, or love for life in England, than the Company's servants who leave it at 17. I send by this post two of my newspaper effusions—the one on slavery, and the other on a regulation which I denounce.

*To Jane*

May 8, 1843.

MY DEAREST JANE,

. . . After I wrote my last to you I went to a grand wedding at a great native's, which I thought more like the Arabian Nights, and where John half lost his heart to a pretty bourgeoisie, but I've no room to tell the tale, which you'll get from himself.

Farewell, ma chère petite Jane. J'embrasse tes jolis yeux noirs.

Your affectionate brother,

W. R.

*To his Father*

May 9, 1843.

I have met with much civility from the great Dwarka Náth Tagore, who has a most beautiful place a few miles from Calcutta. One day that I spent there I combined the Eastern luxury of a ride on an elephant with the English one (tho' hereabout as uncommon) of a row and a swim. The climate continues to agree with me delightfully.—Last night we had a thunderstorm, such as are frequent here at this time of the year, which has so much cleared the air as to make it quite cool, and I am now writing at three o'clock in the day without any punkah. This is the vacation, which lasts till the 15th June, the arrival of which I shall hail with pleasure.

*To Charlotte*

June 4, 1843.

MY DEAREST SISTER,

This is your birthday, my sweet beloved Charlotte, the day that I have so seldom passed with you, but on

which I have never failed to feel for you the tenderest wishes of welfare and happiness—wishes which you so richly deserve to have realized, and which you will not believe I do not entertain the less strongly on account of the distance from which I waft them to you. Though nearly always away from home on this day, it is one associated with so many pleasant recollections to me that I ever hail it as one fraught with good omens to me, unlike our other festival of Christmas Day, which has nearly always been a gloomy one to me since we ceased to pass it together. I rejoice, then, this year to be able to send you, by way of birthday present, which your affection will render valuable, the lines I am now writing, containing not only the assurance of the most deep affection, and most earnest wishes of your brothers for your welfare—and which you scarce required—but also an account of their health and happiness which will I am sure delight you.

The storms which visit Calcutta occasionally are of an awful violence, though quite free from the horrible destructive character they bear in the Western World. I have not yet seen one of the worst, but the vivid beauty of the lightening, the sharp, distant, near, ear-piercing peal of thunder and the tremendous downfall of rain are very different from the characteristics of a storm at home.

We are expecting an august visitor in the person of our Governor General, who, either from a hint received from the Ministers at home, that he ought not so completely to shake off the trammels of his Council, as his enemies say, or because it occurred to him one morning while shaving that it would be amusing to cut short the thousand surmises that were made about his going to the hills or to England, via Bombay, or from a sudden whim which his best friends admit him fond of, resolved on coming in person to the capital and will be here about the beginning of July. I feel inclined to like him personally, from all I have heard, for his extreme independence and contempt for the etiquette and affectation of greatness to which all the great people here are rivetted—both of these qualities, however, with him border on the opposite faults, and there is no denying that his acts were many of them thoughtless and absurd, and which, if he had but consulted any one with the least knowledge of the country, or paused to reflect himself, he would never have committed.—There is no lack, however,

of energy, or good intention in him, and his main blunders were from his reposing no confidence either in his predecessor or in the Company's servants. There can be little doubt that these latter are often very inefficient and brought up with limited, narrow views on public matters, rarely met with among superior men in Europe; but this is by no means universal, and by rejecting their assistance altogether he has deprived himself of his most natural, though in some respects a defective ally. The Somnâth Gates was a foolish business, of which however too much has been made, and which might well be pardoned if the rest of his policy was good. The only really grave charge against him is his conduct to nearly every officer who was employed in high office by, or who had the confidence of, Lord Auckland. They have nearly all been treated with neglect, however good their conduct, like Major Pottinger, whom I spoke of in my last. The latter is a very fine fellow (tho' a very ugly one) and the most unostentatious hero you can imagine, save our Richmond, who, however, as he possesses the heroic exterior, no one could be surprised at being told he was a preux chevalier as they would in Pottinger's case. Another dignitary has lately returned to the Presidency, of whom I have heard much before I became acquainted with him—the Bishop of Calcutta. He was known at home as Daniel Wilson, as a man of considerable ability, most amiable character, good judgment, and much beloved by his parishioners. But it seems, with all these qualities, there was a latent eccentricity within him, which episcopal dignity alone could call into life, and which, completely unchecked as it has been for the last ten years from his exalted position, goes far to neutralize the efficiency of all his virtues. There is more bonhomie about him, a more uncontrollable desire to say the first and simplest thing that comes into his mind, than about any man I ever saw. This renders him, in society, the most amusing man you could meet with, for mixed with this there is a great kindness of heart, play of fancy and fluency of expression, in the midst of which some whimsical remark, made with earnestness & gravity, puts your gravity almost to the test.—Thus, for instance, in giving a bridal party to a young couple, he led the gentleman about, introducing him to all the great people, and pointing a moral at the same time (which he does *on every occasion*) saying: "See how worthy



and sensible a choice my young friend [the lady] has made. She did not choose him for his beauty, for you see he cannot be called handsome, nor for his wit, for I never heard that he had any pretensions to any, but for far better things, for a good heart," etc. The poor fellow being in truth hideous and silencious. Precisely the same peculiarity is carried into the pulpit, and completely destroys the effect of discourses, which in some passages are on the point of rising into eloquence, when some absurd image or climax presents itself. The last sermon I heard him preach was on the Christian virtues, among which he assigned a high place to honesty, and, as a fitting exercise of the quality, he dwelt with great pathos on the propriety of returning the books you have borrowed within a reasonable time and without injury. He gave me a very kind reception on my calling, said that his anxious desire was to see the bar as respectable here as it was in England: that is, always going to church twice of a Sunday, and never taking Sunday newspapers. He little knew our brethren at home. We are to dine with him in a day or two, so I daresay my next account will contain some amusing incidents. His liberality is unbounded—he never intends going home, and spends every sixpence of his salary in the country—but here again his whims lead him astray: he has subscribed lacs of rupees to a Cathedral in Calcutta for which there is very little occasion. I had a charmingly kind letter from Richmond the other day, to whom I had communicated the newspaper offer, which he entreats me to resist and offers me the use of his purse until I have got the practice he anticipates for me. I am very happy in being so well able to dispense with such a kind offer, but still more so in having such a kind friend. His month's salary of 800 Rupees is far from being too much for him, as his expenses are considerable, he being constantly on the move, and obliged to journey in some state.—The Irvines are as kind as ever, and the time glides by so pleasantly under their hospitable roof.

My conscience smites me for never having mentioned, I think, poor Félicie in my letters. I sincerely trust that she is well and happy and that she retains the nice looks and innocent appearance that made Lady Rodd compare her to Naaman's little maid. I am sure the scriptural maiden was no more devoted to her unfortunate master than she

is to you all. I was charmed as well as touched to hear of the tablet to our sweet darling Emily, and of the most appropriate and touching inscription, but you have not yet told me where her dear remains lie; I feel anxious to hear. John is famously well, growing I think, and better-looking than I have ever seen him. He will not probably be posted for a month or two until his eccentric Lordship makes a sudden resolve and posts everyone.

*To Charlotte*

*July 8, 1843.*

John is going up in about a week to join his new regiment at Jaunpore (the 5th Regt.). Jaunpore is, I understand, a very nice station indeed in a pleasant and picturesque country, and the 5th is a very good regiment with an excellent Colonel and Major. Jervis, the latter, is a very old friend of Irvine's who values him much. I transcribe on another sheet some heroic lines composed by me on the occurrence of a certain catastrophe which occurred to an unknown youth as I was driving in the carriage with Selina and Irvine. I believe poor Campbell's "On Linden" has been more frequently parodied, and is more easy to parody, than any poetry in the language. The post is on the point of going, so with the most affectionate love to you, my dear girls, and my beloved father, I am

Your ever affectionate brother,

W. R.

*Parody on Campbell's Hohenlinden*

In Kid Street when the sun was low  
All spotless rode the unwary beau,  
And white as snow-drops was the flow  
Of this brigadoe's finery.

But Kid Street saw another sight,  
When from his palfrey fell the knight,  
Forcing his garments, ah! too light,  
To part in cruel mockery.

In Gervain's <sup>1</sup> newest spoils arrayed,  
 The horseman view'd thy charms, fair maid,  
 He gazed on thee and nought surveyed  
 Save thy blue eyes of witchery.

Then tripped the steed to meet the driven,  
 Wide gap'd his galligaskins riven,  
 And louder than the bolt from heaven  
 Cracked Gibson's <sup>2</sup> choicest stitchery.

'Twas night, but yet yon ghastly crack  
 Pierces the darkness at thy back,  
 The Beestie <sup>3</sup> fierce and Cooley <sup>4</sup> black  
 Shout at thy tattered drapery.

But browner yet those spots shall grow,  
 For Kid Street's mud stains Gibson's snow,  
 And muddier yet thy best hat flew  
 Down gutters rolling rapidly.

The dark mud thickens : up, poor knave,  
 Thy pantaloons thou cannot save,  
 Then quickly mount : nor wildly rave  
 Upon yon Durzee's <sup>5</sup> treachery.

Foes few have met, as ye did meet :  
 He wished the snow his winding-sheet,  
 The brightest eyes in all Kid Street  
 Had not then mock'd thy misery.

Excuse this nonsense, which has made us laugh in Kid Street; but it may appear very dull and stupid at Villers-le-bel.

*To his Mother*

August 8, 1843.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

The charming account which last mail brought me of you all filled me with joy, and I trust will be repeated by that which is not far off. Those alone who have been for any length of time at a great distance from those they love best in this world can appreciate the delight with

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated *modiste française* in Calcutta.

<sup>2</sup> An equally celebrated tailor.

<sup>3</sup> A water-carrier.

<sup>4</sup> There must be some mistake here; the original says the fiery Hun, here he is called Cooley (a porter, or low native).

<sup>5</sup> A tailor.

which each monthly arrival is hailed. During the present rainy season, the private mails are often delayed two or three days beyond their time, being carried from Bombay to Calcutta across a country, where scarce a road exists, by the only conveyance which either chattel or human being can travel over it by, on the backs of the native runners, and the heavy character of the soil in the wet season renders the journey most formidable.

John is now, I presume, somewhere about Monghyr, a place on the Ganges, about half-way between this and Benares. You will see by the letter from Berhampore that he is getting on very pleasantly in his Budgerow.<sup>1</sup> I have very good accounts of his new regiment—and am far from sorry that he has left the first, for though the Colonel was one of the most accomplished men in India, and some of the officers pleasant men, I did not think much of some of the younger officers in it, and do not doubt that John will gain by the change. The post (dák) stations on the river are few and far between, and so I have not heard from him since he wrote from Berhampore—the letter I enclose.

The great dinner parties have lost all their charm in my eyes, at all events for the hot weather. A certain dulness, possibly arising from the early rising of all the convives, a not unnatural desire to be in bed instead of doing the polite, generally tho' not always overcharges them. But people are sensible enough to give exceedingly few of these during the hot months, and in the cold they are far more pleasant. Contrary to the American fashion, you find, on rising from the dinner table, the ladies all seated in the centre of the room, which the punkah renders the only eligible place. You rush to the spot, not where the greatest attractions are presented by a fair neighbour, but where you are likely to receive most of the punkah. And to this you cleave in a morbid fear that if you desert it for an instant you will forfeit its (not her) good graces.

*To Charlotte*

*August 8, 1843.*

Among other engagements of this week, I must not forget the chief and grand one in a fashionable point of view, viz. a dinner to which Lord Ellenborough has invited

<sup>1</sup> House-boat.



me on Friday. His lordship has encountered bitter reproaches from most of the inhabitants of Calcutta, and especially the civilians, for shutting himself up at Barrackpore and scarcely ever coming out or inviting any one in Calcutta. His great object is to be popular with the military, and in this he has succeeded to his heart's content, for, being really a very eloquent orator, he has drawn such pictures of his respect for military glory and achievements, that every ensign, John among the number, holds his head higher in consequence. He lately published a notification that he should give no private audiences upon private affairs, which disgusted the hunters after patronage. But, having nothing to ask of him, I boldly presented my letter to his private secretary, and, though his lordship was not then visible, I immediately received a most polite invitation to Government House for Friday next, so that "Je n'ai qu'à me louer de sa politesse." I am sorry I cannot give you an account by this mail of the dinner. The great man is here a great object of curiosity, on account of the strangeness of his public ways, but I am inclined to think that in private he is a very kind and courteous gentleman—"Nous verrons."

*To his Mother*

*September 21, 1843.*

I must tell you of a change that has taken place in the position of the Irvines here. He has had a new and most responsible and honourable appointment given to him—that of superintendent of Marine of Bengal—corresponding, as Lord Ellenborough says, to that of Lord High Admiral at home. The Company's naval affairs had got into sad confusion under the charge of a Marine Board, who apparently mismanaged everything, and, as they had no naval officer here of sufficient standing in whom they had enough confidence, the Governor-General conferred it upon Irvine; but it is likely enough that the Court of Directors will send out some Naval Officer of experience to take his place, of which he will not be sorry, as his present duty is most harassing. He gets no additional emolument, save an official residence rent free. They move at the end of the month into their new house, which is at Garden Reach (of which you have doubtless heard)

and commands a most enchanting river view. It is a most charming though ramblingly built house, with a beautiful and extensive garden down to the river edge, a capital boat, etc. My intention was to have left them and sought quarters of my own when they got into their new house, as I shall by that time have been with them ten months, and by their kindness they have enabled me to bear the additional expense without inconvenience; but on my telling them of it, they so kindly and earnestly declared that, until I could set up my house as a married man, they would not think of my quitting their roof, that I quite altered my plans and have determined on continuing with them. I need scarcely say how infinitely more comfortable and in every respect desirable this arrangement for me is, and I have the satisfaction of thinking that it implies neither expense or trouble of any kind to them. But how rare it is to meet with such kindness and generosity as theirs. I confess that the life of a bachelor in Calcutta "ne me souriait pas trop," for in it there is scarcely any medium betwixt complete solitariness and a constant round of gaiety and society, both of which are most undesirable, especially in this climate. As it is, there is no happier home in India than that which I owe to the Irvines' benevolence.

*To Jane*

*September 21, 1843.*

I must give you an account of one of the trials I was engaged in. I had one day received my first brief in a criminal cause and had defended a poisoner with some success, when the following day I was surprised by a message that the judge wished to speak to me. I found the Court so crowded that I could scarcely find my way to H. Seton on the Bench, and, when I did, he told me that four prisoners, whose trials had commenced, were undefended by counsel, while two counsel appeared against them for the prosecution, and he asked me if I would undertake their defence. To this I readily assented, although the opening speech of my opponent was over and the evidence had already begun, and I found that my clients were all Jews, accused of breaking into the house of a wealthy and very reverend-looking old Jew, who is in great repute among the tribes. Every Jew, I believe, in

Calcutta, to the number of seven hundred, were present at the trial, and every face, as it turned towards me, or the prisoners, assumed an expression of the fiercest hate, for it seemed the prisoners had incurred the hatred of the other Jews by some religious non-observances. I should tell you that when the judge told them that they might have the benefit of Counsel if they chose, they all exclaimed : "Great Judge, thou art our father and our mother, but if thou art generous, and the mighty Counsellor will consent, we will implore him to become our father and mother instead." My children were handsome young fellows, richly dressed as Greek sailors, and the whole scene was one of the most striking you can imagine, the Jewish costume here being far more picturesque than the old clos' men about London or Paris, and the anxiety of everyone seemed intense. I exerted myself to my utmost for my *enfants* and I believe half drove the venerable-looking old prosecutor, who was at least as much animated with feelings of private vengeance as of public justice, out of his wits by a protracted cross-examination, and late at night I made an impassioned speech to the jury in their defence. And now I am sure you feel certain that after this speech they were all acquitted ; but I am sorry to disappoint you—they were all found guilty—and transported for seven years. The judge, in summing up, complimented me on my ingenuity, and when a judge compliments a counsel before a jury it is generally at the expense of his clients, for they construe it then : "that as much has been said as could be said for a bad cause." I had the satisfaction of learning afterwards that my clients were all notorious thieves and bad characters and no doubt deserved their fate, though I had strong doubts as to the innocence of one man. The Court very handsomely sent me a fee of nearly 100 Rupees, which I however thought it better to return.

I have omitted to say one thing of the gay doings of the past month which I ought to have considered are naturally more interesting to you than these legal details. In the first place, I was most kindly and affably received by Lord Ellenborough at a sumptuous banquet given by him to the military, at which mine was nearly the only black coat. He is a tall, fine-looking man, with a very brilliant eye and frank, open address. But to counterbalance this advantage there is something of his obstinacy and unyielding character

in his expression, which, if otherwise, would be very winning. Several Balls have been given in honour of him, or Sir Hugh Gough and Lady Gough, the new Commander in Chief; but, not feeling gaily inclined, I only went to one, a very nice and brilliant Ball given by the military to Lord Ellenborough, at which I heard him speak. In this he really does shine, for he has a truly noble delivery and speaks and looks as a Governor General ought. He has one of the most powerful voices I ever heard, and modulates it with great skill, and all his expressions are powerful and well chosen. He has been much blamed for launching forth so loudly in praise of the army to the exclusion of the civil branch of the services. But really at balls given by the military and in honour of his return from military achievements, I don't see why he should talk about civilians at all. Besides, the one is a fine theme for the orator, and I don't think Demosthenes himself could have said anything eloquent about the Civil Service in general. However, there is one phrase of his which might as well be omitted, however true it may be, and which if too often repeated will get him into trouble with his friends at home: "By the Army this great Country was won, and by the Army it must be maintained."

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, October 17, 1843.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

I have been spending nearly a fortnight with my cousins, the Crawfords, at Burdwan, about 70 miles from Calcutta, this vacation, and returned 3 or 4 days ago with renewed energies and with a stock of health sufficient for the whole coming year, which I earnestly hope may be with me a working one. I enjoyed the change of air, scene, and manners and the country pursuits and habits far more than I had anticipated. The station is a very pretty one, and the immediate neighbourhood picturesque, the people pleasant and friendly, the air and climate delightful. Mrs. Crawford<sup>1</sup> remembers seeing you one evening at our house and at the time told her husband, who was not there, what two charming girls she had met at Aunt Ritchie's.

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte Shakespear, married to James Crawford, B.C.S. She died in Akyab in 1849, leaving eight children.



She is herself a very nice person, with a most sweet, kind disposition, and when you know her you will value her praise. She was, when a young girl of 16 or 17, the prettiest of all the sisters, and had a most graceful figure and carriage. On her late visit to England we found her, tho' in excellent health and only 26 or 27 then, more changed than could have been expected in point of beauty; but she has very much recovered her good looks since her return, and looks quite young and pretty again. She is a beautiful horse-woman, and we had many pleasant rides, which I enjoyed more than any I have since *the* ride, the recollection of which is so dear to me. I have given up riding in Calcutta, and use *Lucknow* only in the buggy, for I find one nag has quite enough to do in that capacity. He is in capital condition and does me excellent service. At Burdwan I rode generally both morning and evening, a good supply of horses being one of the luxuries of a Mofussil life. The society at these stations generally consists of the same authorities. A judge, who is the great man and chief Civil servant there—a Collector who manages the revenue and the Government lands and rents—who in this case was my host Crawford,—and a Magistrate with a young writer for an assistant are the civilians—and the military consisted only of an eccentric engineer who looks after the roads, etc., and an officer for the discovery and suppression of Thuggee. Then there are several Deputy collectors and magistrates who are uncovenanted servants of the Company, and are mostly respectable, but not very exalted Europeans, or intelligent natives, who are now being employed, as they ought to be, much more in places of trust than formerly. One of these native Deputy Collectors whom I saw a good deal of was as full of intelligence and high principle as any European I have ever met and, in point of attainments, a very superior fellow, only it must be admitted that, in the point of principle, this is a very rare qualification with a native, who is generally when in office dreadfully corrupt and oppressive, and requires constant looking after; but my friend, Radakissen Mullick, was a fine exception, and it would be unjust to deny that there are many such, tho' generally widely scattered and far between. Tho' himself quite a Christian in ideas and in his comprehension of the Almighty, his wife and family are as devoted Hindoos as any living—and probably even he would have thought it

a fearful misfortune if any other man than himself had set eyes upon his wife.—The women, I need scarcely say, are one and all sunk in a most deplorable state of ignorance, and this constant seclusion tends to keep alive in them the darkest spirit of their fathers' superstitions, which are the most painful, degrading, and unworthy the dignity of beings possessing reason that can be imagined. But the religious belief both in men and women is so intermingled with their peculiar customs and habits, that the former cannot be shaken without impeaching the latter also, and to this very few of the most intelligent of the Hindoos would consent—and tho' they may be brought to doubt some of the grosser superstitions of their creed, still the foundation of it is indissolubly united to their habits of living, which they would sooner die a thousand times than part with. So that no human means, I fear, will ever avail to wean more than a very small section from the most revolting creed that ever disgraced mankind. The Mahomedans too have become, from their constant contact in these countries with the Hindoos, imbued with their superstitions, and the Mahomedan religion, which is purity itself compared with the Hindoo, has become interwoven with some of their most absurd, tho' not with their grossest tenets. Did you ever see a work of Major Sleeman on the Thugs? The Thuggee officer at Burdwan, Major Riddell, had served under him, and some of his details were deeply interesting. A more awful consequence of superstition never was known than this secret association, which for so many years was never suspected, tho' it spread over every province of India from the Himalayas to Comorin—and hundreds every year fell victims to its bloody and secret machinations. Your German *Vehmgericht* was not more mysterious in its dispensations, the Druids were not so blinded by barbarity and superstition. Major Sleeman has shown the most wonderful sagacity in tracing out the existence of these bands, and for the last three years there has been a regular system established throughout India for the suppression of it, and the horrible scourge has been entirely routed out from those provinces in which it formerly was most prevalent. Still it exists in others to an extent which would appear awful, but for the knowledge that a much greater amount of it has been extirpated by the exertions of British officers. They themselves

attribute their being delivered into the hands of the Philistines by their Divinity (Kalee, the black, or the goddess of destruction), under whose immediate protection they consider themselves, to their having neglected some of her ordinances—either by slaying women (who are privileged, not from any feeling of gallantry, but from being considered as unworthy sacrifices for this goddess) or by disregarding omens, or by sparing a victim after they had once resolved on his death. Sleeman is now an officer of high station, being the G. G.'s Agent in Bundelcund, Saugor & Lahore, about the most ticklish district we have to deal with. He is the immediate superior of Richmond Shakespear, and this brings me to tell you of his new honours, at which I am sure you will rejoice. He has just been appointed the Acting Agent of government in the Scindiah's dominions, (comprising Lahore, etc.), a post of the highest honour and responsibility, with a salary of 2,000 Rs. a month. His former appointment under Sleeman in Bundelcund was a very trying one and he had only 800 Rs. a month; but he discharged his duties there so ably that the G. G., who at first seemed rather inclined to slight him (as one who had just earned fame under his predecessor, which is the only bad feature in his bestowal of patronage, that in other respects is unexceptionable), bestowed this newly created appointment upon him. Is not this a gratifying thing for one who is still but a Lieut. of Artillery (tho' a Brevet Captain)? He is a noble fellow and most richly deserves his good fortune, which even envy is obliged to admit is fairly won.—We are now fairly established in the new house at Garden Reach, into which I think I told you the Irvines were about to move when I last wrote. You cannot conceive a more delightful situation, nor a more beautiful river view than that which the room in which I am writing affords. Do not think me ambitious enough to compare its banks in interest to the Rhine, or even to the dear old Thames—but take the stream itself, the ships that float on it, and the gardens that adorn its banks, and the scene is a moving and beautiful one. The house is situated just on a point of the river, so that you see down it for 5 or 6 miles towards the sea, and up it to the principal part of Calcutta. Our garden is most picturesque with banyan, sago, and other Oriental trees—and there is one of the prettiest walks imaginable along the very edge of the river.



At this season of the year it is a constantly moving scene—the arrival of many a tall ship from our dear native land seems to draw us more near to it and to diminish the distance that separates us from those we love. Yesterday no less than four of the fine large 1,800 ton ships of Green or Wilson passed majestically by, under tow—and this morning at breakfast we saw the *Hindostan* in the distance; she performs the journey to and from Suez with almost clock-like punctuality, as, when she left Calcutta two months ago, it was announced that she would be here on this very day. She came up with a speed almost rivalling that of an English railroad, and on her casting anchor, I drove off to see whether she had the mails on board, hoping to be able to reply in this to the long delayed letter of July. On getting there, I was just delighted to hear that she had brought on all the Calcutta mails, but a minute afterwards was again disappointed by finding that the letters via Marseilles had not come by her. . . .

Our Chief Justice and 2nd Judge have both returned by the *Hindostan* from an expedition to Ceylon; the former, I regret to say, in very bad health still, altho' at Ceylon he seemed quite to have recovered. I trust this may be merely attributable to his sufferings at sea, for he is a wretched sailor, and suffers from sea-sickness in the smoothest weather; but I rejoice at his return, for he is a man in every way to be respected and beloved. I found a gentlemanly looking young officer just landed from the vessel who gave me these particulars about the voyage, and as he was at loss for a conveyance, I offered to drive him into town, when to my surprise, as we were driving along, he suddenly recognized me as an old school fellow; and I found in him an old Etonian named Cust whom I had not seen for 9 or 10 years. The meeting was every way a pleasant one.—He had just come round from Madras, where he has a staff appointment, to see a brother at Calcutta. But there is no lack of old Etonians in these parts. On returning from Burdwan the other day I was very hospitably entertained on the road by the magistrate of Hoogly, and we also discovered in the course of conversation that we were old school fellows, and the meeting was so pleasant that I prolonged my stay by a day. The people of Calcutta have lost (or very nearly so) their old reputation for hospitality, but in the Mofussil it remains unsullied and is really



surprising. On leaving Burdwan I intended to drive in a friend's buggy to the town of Hoogly, nearly 50 miles, in the evening, and to embark at ■ in the morning in a boeah or little pinnace, which would take me down to Calcutta by the river. The offers of horses to help on the road were ridiculously numerous. As it was, my friend had two of his own with him, and we only borrowed 5 in addition, mostly from people we had scarce ever seen before. Nothing could be pleasanter than our drive over ■ rough but picturesque road (perfectly flat, however, as nearly all Bengal is) and thro' a fine evening in the early part of a moonlight night; but, on arriving at Hoogly, we found no boeahs there, and as we felt a little tired with our jolting, we were rather at a loss what to do, when it occurred to me that we had better go up to the Magistrate's house on the chance of getting ■ chairs to pass the night in. On arriving there we found that he had gone to Calcutta, but had left word that if any travellers came beds were to be prepared for them—never did men better enjoy an unexpected night's entertainment (very like an Arabian one) than my companion Wilkie and myself. In the morning our unknown benefactor, Mr. Leycester arrived, was delighted to find us in occupation, kept us to breakfast and tiffin, at which meal, the recognition taking place between us, he insisted on our staying another night, which we did. The next morning we were disturbed at day-break by the bearers rushing in and exclaiming that the "Mem Sahib had come"—upon which we fled from the room only half comprehending his meaning; but it turned out that the judge of another district who was travelling up to Calcutta with his daughter had just alighted from his palkee at his friend's gate, and ours was the only spare bedroom to which the young lady could be shown.—I was greeted on my return to Calcutta by two fresh briefs, and but for the return of the prodigal Dickens (as Jane calls him) I should have little apprehension about my business in the ensuing term—which commences at the end of the month. The other prodigal (a much more agreeable and high-minded, but eccentric man) stopped short at Bombay on his way here.—And now, I believe, I have told you everything that has happened to me since I last wrote, and a thousand times more than enough to tire any one, except you, of my uninteresting proceedings, and I must now have the pleasure

of changing the scene and standing by your side in the dear little drawing-room of St. George's Terrace, where you may possibly be writing to me at this moment. . . .

*To his Mother*

*October 18, 1843.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

You will see by my letters to my sisters how well and happy I still continue. I feel that I shall remain so as long as I have the happiness of receiving such good tidings from you all. My visit to Burdwan was in every way pleasant and I have brought back a stock of health and strength to last for many a month.

You will be charmed to hear of the new honours just reaped by the gallant Sir Richmond. He has had the new appointment conferred on him of the Governor-General's Agent—or the British Representative—in the Dominions of Scindiah—(comprising Lahore, etc.)—a most important and honourable appointment, with a salary of two thousand Rupees a month, or £2,400 sterling per annum. His former post of Assistant Commissioner in Saugor and Bundelcund was only worth 800 Rupees a month, but had very trying and difficult duties attached to it, which he discharged so well as to lead the Governor General (who at first had not seemed at all to appreciate his worth) to give him his present appointment. It is perhaps the first instance of a subaltern (though a brevet captain, he is but a Lieutenant of Artillery) holding so distinguished a situation, except in days of emergency, such as those in which Clive formerly, and Pottinger latterly figured. Marianne received a letter from him yesterday, in which he expresses himself very greatly pleased with his new appointment, which he says exceeds his most sanguine expectations. No other man in the Army perhaps could have been so elevated without exciting much dissatisfaction; but his merit is so generally admitted that even the envious are compelled to be silent. Irvine in his new office has also completely gained the confidence of the great Man. Lord Ellenborough at first appeared somewhat ungracious towards him, but lately has been most polite. It was apprehended that perhaps the Court of Directors would appoint some Naval man to the post, as that would appear more in character than having a military man as marine Superintendent.

A despatch was sent on the subject by the Governor and Council, and Lord Ellenborough inserted with his own hand a paragraph saying that although if a competent naval officer had been on the spot at the time he would have preferred him to a military man, yet having seen the mode in which Major Irvine discharged his duties, he most strongly recommended that he should be confirmed in it. It is one, however, very harassing in its character at present, owing to the confusion in which it was left by his predecessors, and hitherto it has consisted in the most disagreeable of all duties—that of finding fault.

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, January 23, 1844.

. . . I am sorry that I have no interesting cases to tell you of, as you are kind enough to like to hear what I am engaged upon. One about which I have been much occupied has been preparing a long memorial to the Court of Directors for a Captain Campbell, who was turned out of his appointment as Paymaster by Lord Ellenborough upon a supposed offence in selling a house to a native without the consent of Government. This is the third memorial I have had to deal with on appeal from decisions of Lord Ellenborough about officers, and more arbitrary decisions or more contrary to common justice and fairness never came to my notice than these of this friend of the army! . . .

Two circumstances have occurred since I last wrote which have caused me much distress—you have doubtless heard me or my sisters speak of an aunt we have at Ceylon, Mrs. Langslow, and to whom we are all most deeply attached. She is a being gifted with rare talents, infinite taste and wit, the most generous and kindest heart, but alas! with a sensibility so keen and exquisite as to have grown, from constant indulgence of it, quite morbid and Utopian. Her husband was a judge at Ceylon, an excellent lawyer, a clever man and an accomplished gentleman; but, strangely enough, he shared his wife's warm, chivalrous temperament, and they mutually stimulated each other in their wildly romantic principles, till they bordered upon Quixotism. In the rich, they everywhere saw oppression and insolence—in the poor, worth and excellence fettered by misery and degradation; and first in England, then in



Malta, where he was Attorney-General, and lastly at Ceylon, where he was a judge, he has ever waged a crusade against his superiors in office, the governor of the land in which he lived, with motives, it is true, of the most expanded philanthropy, but too often, I fear, without adequate grounds for his indignation and under the influence of a distorted judgment.—The government of Ceylon have at last, after fierce contest, determined on suspending him from his office as judge—an event for which I have trembled ever since I came out, and which is most distressing, as he is in bad health and has scarce any other means of support. There are, of course, two different stories told by the different parties of the island—the favourers of government declare that his opposition on all occasions has been most factious, and that, however able as a lawyer, his violence unfits him entirely for a judge. The liberal party, on the other hand, hold him up as a martyr to his principles and to his avowed determination to do equal justice between the native and the Englishman—and not to bow or tremble before the little greatness of the government—and they ascribe also to private enmity and cabal his removal. There is truth no doubt on both sides, and, for all I can hear, I think he has been dealt with arbitrarily and spitefully; but, as his best friend, I cannot conceal from myself that he has brought it upon his own head, by placing himself in a position where, as a judge, he should never have been—that is, at the mercy of the government, who, if he had acted with prudence, could never have injured him, however desirous of doing so. The natives of Colombo seem to be unanimous in his favour; a piece of plate is to be given him, and most numerous signed petitions to the Government at home have been forwarded on behalf of his restoration. But I fear the hope to be placed on them is but frail—and it is most melancholy to see a man with many noble qualities, sacrificing his all, £1,200 a year, for mistaken principles (perhaps, I should say, a mistaken application of *true* principle in consequence of distorted views). I know you will sympathize with my sorrow at this misfortune to friends so dear to me as they are.

The other might have been sadder than it is, but it is still hard enough. You told me in the letter I received to-day that you all felt great curiosity to know who was the mysterious admirer of Miss Shakespear, of whom I



told you in my letter lost by the *Memnon*. He was one of the finest officers in the service, a Major Sanders, of the Engineers, who had escaped as many dangers as any one man in the disastrous Cabul campaign. He was with General Nott at Candahar and his conduct, throughout the splendid achievements of that army, was most heroic. Nott considered him his right-hand man, and Lord Ellenborough was so much struck by the history of his chivalrous deeds that he gave him the high post of Acting Military Secretary. I saw a great deal of him at Calcutta, and liked and valued him greatly. He had a cultivated mind, noble, generous disposition, tho' always a somewhat melancholy turn. Two months ago he received, in addition to his C.B. cross, the commission of a Lieut. Col., a rare reward for his services, as he was under 40. He had never proposed to Miss Shakespear, but was evidently attached to her, and doubtless if he had spoken his suit would have been successful. Well, he went as Military Secretary with Ellenborough upon this Gwalior campaign, about which the papers will be full when you get this—and seeing a Brigade of 3 regiments with whom he had constantly served in Afghanistan, and called the Candahar Brigade, volunteered to lead a charge against the enemies' guns, and fell at the head of his men, pierced to the heart by a bullet. A finer, more enthusiastic soldier never fell on the field of battle. You may conceive how mournful were the tidings of his death. No one at Calcutta had any notion there would be any engagement at all—when one morning an express arrived from Sir Richmond S. to Irvine, telling him of poor Sanders' fate, and of the battle. This was the only letter that reached Calcutta for 2 days, so judge of the anxiety of people here, who had friends in the army and knew there had been a desperate engagement.

I have just received a letter from my poor dear Aunt at Ceylon—in very cheerful spirits—and in full confidence that her husband will be restored. The whole native population of Colombo, it seems, are petitioning in his favour, and certainly from them he appears to have won golden opinions. Of these she expresses herself quite proud—and particularly, poor soul, of a salver of plate presented to him by the superior officers of the Court with the inscription: "On occasion of his suspension." She is a woman of the warmest, noblest impulses and nature—

like my Augusta in her accomplishments and romantic feelings—unlike her, alas, in not keeping those feelings under the control of excellent common sense. What a contrast to her stately sister, my Aunt Halliday, who is now staying with us ! She has much of her sister's talent and wit (tho' not, I think, so delicate and happy) and is most kind-hearted and truly excellent, but with a great share of common sense, and a love of the world and society, which would make her shrink with horror from such a life as that preferred by her younger sister. Her manners are quite those of a lady of the old school, and a very fine old lady she is. Her excellent husband is the funniest old gent. you ever saw—eyes like saucers, and a nose like a rhinoceros, complexion like a carrot and a heart like a prince's. If, as I hope, you see them in England, you'll be amused at the contrast, and ask, as every one does, how could that fine woman marry that little Doctor. Yet a happier old couple or more attached don't exist.

W. R.

*To his Mother*

*January 23, 1844.*

The papers will tell you the other particulars of the fight at Gwalior, which has been fatal to so many brave men, and the more interesting to us, as it is the scene of Richmond's future fortunes. He, as usual, had distinguished himself in the fight, having volunteered as one of Sir H. Gough's aides-de-camp, and his horse was slightly wounded. He has since received the hearty thanks of the Governor-General for the mode in which he introduced his regiment into the fort at the town of Gwalior, without bloodshed, which was much feared ; and there cannot be a doubt that the severe beating the Mahrattas, who fought with their old spirit, have received will do more to secure Richmond's comfort and safety at Gwalior than anything could have, and so far we ought to rejoice at the victory, for there can be little doubt had they dissimulated a little longer and not come to open war, before Richmond took charge, his life would have been in danger from their ill-will and treachery. They have now been thoroughly subdued and most handsome terms accorded them, while,

at the same time, care has been taken to render the party patronised by us so secure that probably for years nothing will shake them. And Richmond, though he will have a delicate task, will have a safe one. Old John, luckily for us, although I daresay he thinks unluckily for him, has no chance of being called to the field for many a long year. I have excellent accounts of him up to the 6th of the month, but I hope he writes good long accounts to you of himself.

*To his Father*

*January 23, 1844.*

A fine ship, the Agincourt, broke loose from her mooring opposite our house last night and literally was as nearly as possible walking into the house, which is close to the river. She was so large that her bowsprit would with ease have entered the windows of the room where the Hallidays slept, and not a little have astonished the little doctor. As it was she went on shore a little higher up and plunged into the dock where the Company's steamers lie, smashing and seriously injuring two of them, and on being pushed off into the middle of the river she boarded a third. These had all just had large sums spent on them in repairs, and Irvine had been exerting himself to get them ready for sea, which they would have been, but for this accident. No damage was done to the ship herself except smashing a boat.

*To Charlotte*

*February 12, 1844.*

Do you remember Mrs. Pattle, in Paris, about ten years since? The two youngest daughters,<sup>1</sup> who came out last year, about the same time I did, are two of the prettiest and nicest girls here. The old lady herself is still looking [illegible] and desired me at a ball the other night at her daughter's, Mrs. Cameron's, to remember her kindly to my

<sup>1</sup> Sophie, afterwards Mrs. Dalrymple, and Virginia, afterwards Lady Somers. Dr. Jackson and his wife must have been in Calcutta at this time. The name of Dr. Jackson is still affectionately remembered and quoted by the Indians in Calcutta, to whom he was a real friend.

mother, if she recollected her, and to give her love to William Thackeray. Mrs. Cameron, the plainest of her daughters, is now quite a grand lady here, the wife of a Member of Council.<sup>1</sup>

*To Miss Trimmer*

*February 13, 1844.*

I must tell you of an offer I have received and declined. It was that of the appointment of Secretary to a noble charitable Institution here, called the Martinière, consisting of 2 schools for orphan boys and girls—and its duties would have consisted only of a general superintendence of the establishment and the management of its funds, etc., and would not, I was told, have materially interfered with my practice—an hour a day being the utmost call upon my time that would be made except on extraordinary occasions. The salary at first offered was Rs. 200, which was afterwards increased to Rs. 300 a month, as they are anxious to secure a person of classical education—an M.A.—in order to inspire respect in the masters. But I felt that it was of such vital importance at present for me to do nothing which could interfere with my professional duties, that the salary would be but an unsatisfactory compensation for the injury which the acceptance of the appointment might have done me with the attorneys, the great thing being to get everything done for them with the utmost expedition, which it is impossible to do safely or creditably unless one is wholly devoted to one's profession, and ready at all times to give one's whole thoughts to it if required.—I had some reluctance in declining a certainty such as this, but I have been very happy ever since I gave in my determination. For really, for this last month, I have not had time conscientiously to attend to any other duties, however slight, than those of my profession. My friend who most urged me to accept the appointment was Dr. Charles, the senior Scotch clergyman of Calcutta and a very superior man, but Irvine and other kind friends were much opposed to my taking it. It is certain that it would not have done me any good in my profession, and it might have injured me very seriously. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Charles Hay Cameron was Law Commissioner with Macaulay, and succeeded him as Law Member in 1838. He returned home in 1848.



*To Miss Trimmer*CALCUTTA, *March 10, 1844.*

. . . A sermon was preached for the Society for the promotion of Christian Knowledge, and it was delivered by a native convert who has lately been ordained, named Bonnerjee. It was exceedingly well composed and delivered, the subject very ably and feelingly treated, the language excellent, and, be it said in a whisper, better chosen than that of  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the orthodox clergymen here. The Governor General was present, having come in, I believe, without previous notice—and some part of the sermon he might well have applied to himself, for it consisted in a really forcible comment upon the evils of war and the miseries man thereby entails upon man—far exceeding, said the preacher, those caused by plague, pestilence and famine; and also those which any of the brute creation inflicts upon their own species. Whether these remarks were distasteful or not to his Lordship, who entertains so statesmanlike a reverence for the pomp, pride and circumstance of glorious war, I do not know; but this I can say, that when the plate was handed round after church, and the aide-de-camp took the pencil and piece of paper on it to write down the amount of the viceregal donation, the great man shook his head, and nothing was given! Man being an imitative creature, I fear little was realized from the rest of the congregation, tho' I confess I cannot conceive a better illustration of the excellence of the object which the poor preacher advocated than himself; and the talents, education and piety with which he had, solely thro' the exertions of this or some similar institution, become endowed. Calcutta has been in great dissipation—balls, dinners and concerts succeeding each other with scarcely any breathing time between. As many members of our society leave about this time, farewell parties both public and private are given to do honour to the parting guest. One grand ball is to be given by the "Civil Society" of Calcutta to Lord Ellenborough—an absurd and expensive entertainment and wholly unnecessary one, in which, nevertheless, I have felt bound to join, not out of respect to the Lord, but because I cannot well help it. His Lordship has always expressed himself in very slighting ways of all classes in the Presidency except the Military—

and upon his arrival here a second time after the Afghanistan triumphs, no party or address was proposed for him. But the military started the idea of giving him a ball, and the civilians begged to be allowed to join, but this was declined by the military upon the ground that some of his hangers on had mentioned that he would be more gratified by a party exclusively military.

Well, we poor civilians, no wise daunted, agreed not to be outdone by the men of war, and we arranged to give him a ball also, for which he postponed fixing the day from time to time until he heard of his mother's death by the English mail, when he adjourned it for some more auspicious occasion. Well, on his return to Calcutta, this time the good people moved an address of congratulation to him, and, not contented with that, a deputation waited on him to fix a day now for the unfortunate ball, which the great majority had thought was declined altogether by him, and which he had evidently thought a *corvée* to be *avoided* if possible. Now as I had been invited as a guest to the military party, I feel that the party to the Lord was much more like a return party to the military than anything else, and in that light think it my duty to subscribe to it, and I suppose of all the givers of the party scarcely one, except those who have something to gain by the great man, is induced to go by any more sensible motive than myself, so you may conceive that the compliment is an empty one. . . .

*To Miss Trimmer*

*March 18.*

The ball was a brilliant one (but cold, and I thought sad), and the great man's speech, tho' eloquent and full of fire, the most arrogant, despotic, and ungracious you can conceive. He spoke of himself as of a Being of superior nature to those around him—of the insanity of every man who ventured to withhold his admiration and awe for the Government of India—of the sacrifices he had made in coming here—the great man he was at home, the still greater he should be when he returned—the contempt he felt for patronage—distinction before the enemy being

the first claim with him to advancement—his constant occupation in looking for the best men, etc., and that with these sentiments if the society of Calcutta did not find his presence at the capital agreeable, “the fault is yours, not mine.” All this, delivered in a fine loud voice, but with the gestures and tone of a man replying to a desperate philippic from his fiercest opponent instead of to the complimentary oration with which our excellent friend (for I’ve described him to you), Charles Prinsep,<sup>1</sup> had proposed his health, made it certainly one of the most *remarkable* speeches I ever heard, especially as it was made to his entertainers, to people 9–10ths of whom being merchants or lawyers, were entirely independent of his patronage upon which he gave us such a lecture. I must not omit in this description that he *omitted* any mention whatever of the ladies, beginning and ending his speech with the word “Gentlemen.” . . .

Ever your devoted and affectionate

W. RITCHIE.

### *To Miss Trimmer*

*April, 1844.*

I am afraid I am talking nonsense, but I feel to-night privileged to talk nonsense even to you. For shall I give you a peep into *the* magic mirror you have said you should like to have, and which would so woefully disappoint you could you see into it.—

Know then, that I had been hard at work all day upon some pleading for a friend, i.e. ■ man who honours you by taking both your brains and his own fee, when, just as I was going to leave my chambers for our evening drive, a printer’s di’el (who would indeed, if you could see him in London, justify the title, being black as jet) comes in with an accepted Article of mine for to-morrow’s Englishman to correct for the press (a necessary office as you may think, from my detestable hand, which for your sake I would try to correct even at the degradation of having a maître de calligraphie, professeur I should have said, were it possibly procurable). He also bore in hand ■

<sup>1</sup> Nephew of Sir Thoby Prinsep.

paper of to-day in which there appears a new Act of the Government for abolishing slavery throughout India—a fine theme for a newspaper scribbler, who wants lawful subjects as much as any monarch. But, to give point to the Article, it must appear the day after to-morrow, i.e. must be written to-night—and I had given up work for the night. But *qu'importe*—I give up my drive, bolt a hasty dinner, which astonishes the Irvines,—& tho' my pen felt rather oppressed by the *kid* upon which my wolf-like appetite had been satiated, I have managed to knock off a column-full before 12 o'clock, at which hour, corresponding in lateness to about 3 in London, I am writing to you. . . .

*To Miss Trimmer*

May 14, 1844.

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

. . . There is a case in which I am retained, which I little anticipated when I have on former occasions mentioned the name of my client to you. It is that poor Lady Casement, whose husband died, as I told you, a short time ago, leaving a will entirely in her favour. That will is now disputed on the ground of its being imperfectly executed. If it is set aside, she will only get one half instead of the whole of her property, which amounts to about £50,000, tho' at first it was supposed much larger. The mode in which the informality was discovered was curious. Sir William had a niece in Calcutta married to a member of our bar named Fulton (who came out a year before me and in whose house I had that damp room last year).—With their nephew and niece, however, the Casements were not on good terms, on account of some disagreement about money matters between Sir W. and Fulton's father. In this her Ladyship, who is a woman of strong prejudices, appears to have been to blame. Just before the death of Sir W., which was very sudden, he made his will, and had it attested by the two doctors who attended him, but unfortunately they were not both present when he signed it, one having been delayed, altho' he acknowledged his signature in their presence, and when they signed their names, they did not do it as they ought, strictly in his



presence, but went into the next room where there was light to do so. This room, however, was only separated by a thin transparent screen of silk from Sir W.'s, which did not reach to the ground, and thus he could have seen the legs of the witnesses as they signed, tho' not their hands or faces—the great question will be whether that can be considered signing “in the presence of the testator.”—Well Sir W. died a few hours afterwards, and at his funeral, Fulton appeared and requested to be allowed to act as chief mourner. This was acceded to, and he got into the first mourning coach. In that was also one of the Doctors who had attested the will, and he in the coach told another old friend of Sir W.'s the whole story of the execution of the will, not deeming there was anything defective in it, but relating it as an instance of the clearness of Sir W.'s faculties to the last. Fulton remained silent in a corner of the coach; and listened to the tale with eager ears, for if the will fails he will be entitled to a share of the moiety of the property, as his wife is one of the next of kin.—A few days afterwards, to the astonishment of everyone, and to the horror of the poor Doctor (a fine, venerable old gentleman named Nicolson), Fulton enters a caveat to prohibit the passing of the will, and the present suit is commenced for the purpose of trying its validity. The poor old lady, who disliked the Fultons before, is not likely to feel much more reconciled to them now—but she was in a state of distraction at the loss of her husband (followed quickly by that of her only son) and this may have a good effect in rousing her. It is said that Sir W. had requested her to leave the bulk of their property to his relations, including the Fultons, and certainly it would have been more satisfactory for them to take it in that way than by disputing the will in this. There is something half revolting, half ludicrous in the discharge of the last pious offices to a relative being made the means of frustrating his dying wishes. . . .

I can assure you that I feel no great temptation to try the Hoogly. The sight of a shark's teeth at sea, and of a crocodile in the river which destroyed a poor fellow very near our house, makes me quite look with loathing upon the element, of which I was so fond, as a receptacle for my body. . . .

W. R.

*To Charlotte**June 4, 1844.*

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

I cannot let this day, which brings with it so many pleasing associations of you, pass by without a few lines to wish you many, very many returns of your new birthday. This year you will be glad to hear I am about to pass the day, I was about to say "*en régal*," I may quite say in vice-regal splendour, for Lord Ellenborough is an old Etonian and has invited all the sons of old Eton he could collect to celebrate our old Regatta day, George the III's birthday, and, not the least title to respect, Miss Charlotte Ritchie's birthday, by feasting with him at Barrackpore ! This was a very public-spirited thing in him, *n'est-ce pas ?* and reflects high credit upon his good nature and good feeling. I don't think we shall muster more than 15 or 16, but *nous verrons*. I shall tell you all about it to-morrow, suffice it now that I am to start in about half an hour with a pleasant companion and in high spirits on the pleasant road to Barrackpore (10 miles off), in a buggy with a hired horse which I change half-way, and which, therefore, I need not drive quite as tenderly as I should my own trusty Lucknow, who has too much week-day hard work to be impressed by his master upon a holiday such as this, *n'est-ce pas bien ça ?*

*June 8.*

Since writing the above lines, dearest Charlotte, the Governor's fête has come and gone, and it went off as agreeably in every respect as I had anticipated. He was most good-natured and affable, descending to the level of an Eton school-boy throughout the evening. We mustered altogether 21 Etonians, and did full justice in all respects to the auspicious day we met to celebrate. The Government House at Barrackpore is a very handsome building, situated delightfully in the fine Park, which greatly resembles an English one, and on the river edge. It was built by another old and true Etonian, Lord Wellesley, who died only last year, and dying, requested to be laid in the Chapel of his beloved Eton. Nothing could be more cordial than the reception his successor gave us ; and no

man can be more agreeable when he chooses. I must be thought lucky in sitting next him, and being honoured with some of his conversation. In one way, I fear, we behaved very ill. The Deputy Governor, Mr. Bird, who was staying in the house, was present, though not an Etonian. Now Bird is a much greater man in his own imagination than the Governor General himself, and expects and expects far more obsequiousness and respect, as is the wont of the second greatest man of a place (it was he who received the slap on the back with, "how like you grow to old Bird!" the point of which story was wholly due to the puffed-up dignity of the great man so assailed). Unhappily for the dignitary, there sat, at no great distance, one Mr. Dampier, the Superintendent of Police, a very clever, but somewhat eccentric fellow, much disliked by Bird, on account of his free and easy manner, and with spirits as high and uncontrolled as if, in fact, he had just escaped from Eton for a holiday. From the moment of sitting down, Dampier talked away incessantly and much humour . . . innumerable Eton traditions and jokes and making an application of every one to the luckless Deputy Governor, whom he represented as having fallen into the hands of the Philistines and exposed to be tossed in a blanket. Bird was for some time perfectly aghast at being treated by an inferior of his own service with so much familiarity. But, as he saw Lord Ellenborough was greatly amused, and not inclined to support him in any assertion of dignity, he affected every now and then to join in the joke and enjoy it, but ever and anon assumed the mightiness which usually characterizes him, and looked as if he would have expelled from the service his unrelenting adversary. I fear it was not very well-bred in the giver of the feast to allow this persecution or in the convives to show their amusement at it. But there was something so irresistibly ludicrous in the struggle between obsequiousness and wounded dignity that it was impossible to suppress our smiles.

An amusing thing happened when the Ameers of Scinde were first presented to Lord Ellenborough. He offered to introduce them to the Deputy-Governor. "Is he your eldest son?" was the reply. Bird, being the oldest man of the two, and much the oldest looking, made the question rather a trying one for his Lordship's gravity. I saw all

of these unfortunate worthies (the Ameers) at a great entertainment given by his Lordship upon the Queen's birthday. There are about a dozen of them, with very warlike and unintellectual countenances, fine white beards and moustaches and animal-like shapes, for the chief ones among these are enormously fat. This is considered by them the greatest beauty, and the head Ameer is literally the greatest among them.

We had a great display of firework figures, upon the success of which his lordship was said to have set his heart, as he was desirous of eclipsing his predecessor in the splendour of this favourite tomáshá of the natives. Grand and tempting was the programme of the battle of Maharajpore: triumphal arches, Noah's Ark—the birds and beasts gambolling—giants wrestling, and Adam and Eve looking on the sport and ultimately ascending, were among the wonders announced in the *affiche*. The evening was beautiful; tens of thousands of people covered the wide plain of Calcutta. But, alas! the whole display was a perfect failure, nothing near so good as an ordinary night at Tivoli. The powder, it was said, had got damp, but it was suspected that it must have been the mismanagement of a very worthy little man, one Col. Powney, who volunteered to superintend on the occasion—and who had twice previously been almost equally unsuccessful. The wicked newspapers say that his exertions on the third occasion deserve promotion, and that instead of Col. Powney he has won the name of General Failure. The very Ameers, who, it is said, excel as pyrotechnists, are reported (how truly I know not) to have observed that if Col. Powney had commanded at Meeanee instead of General Napier, he would not that night have been witnessing his fireworks, or the Governor-General's hospitality in Calcutta. The poor little fellow, who had toiled like any Galley slave for a fortnight in superintending these fireworks, had set his heart upon succeeding, and this is all the gratitude he gets for his disinterested exertions. I met him the other day looking dreadfully downcast and he told me he was in the greatest distress of mind, being summoned to attend a coroner's inquest on the bodies of the two poor men who had been killed by the explosion of some part of the works. He also expressed himself much disgusted with the newspaper Articles, but his face quite brightened, and he



appeared to forget all his sorrows, when I told him that his Mount Etna was very brilliant and generally admired. This was an explosion of an immense number of sky rockets simultaneously, which was really very brilliant, but which no one would have dreamt of being Etna except for the programme.

*To his Father*

*July 14, 1844.*

The public news brought us by last mail was indeed of a stirring character. His Lordship, however, seems to have been pretty well aware that either his time or that of the Court of Directors was up, for he is said not to have evinced the least surprise about it, and he had taken a private house previously just outside of Calcutta, which looked as if he had seen the coming blow. This, however, he has not occupied, for all the honors of vice-Royalty are still paid him while he remains. His successor is looked for now in about ten days, and is looked for with much curiosity. By all accounts, he is a very different man from his predecessor. As you observe, being an old soldier, and having had enough of war in his day, I doubt not he will be peaceably inclined and will not go out of his way to seek the bubble reputation, at all events in the cannon's mouth. Generally, I think it is now considered here that the Court of Directors have acted in a manly, proper manner, for the hesitation on the part of the ministry about the production of the papers looks as if they were ashamed of some of his despatches to his worshipful masters. Though his intentions were in many respects excellent and his abilities very great, yet his imperious disposition and impatience of advice and want of reflection before he acted prevented him from being popular generally. A portion of the Army alone regret his departure, and are about to give him a parting entertainment. With singular bad taste they resolved that none save the military should be admitted to join, and although the rest of the community would willingly have joined in any general entertainment, yet they have too fresh in their recollection the arrogant demeanour of the late great man at the last civil fête offered him to give

him a separate one themselves, so that the military feast will produce two bad results. First, it will confirm the impression now prevalent that he has offended all classes, save the military, and will also place the military in a false position with respect to their honourable masters, as it does not seem very consistent with soldier-like discipline to make an exclusively military demonstration in favor of the political career of one who is recalled solely, as was understood, for insulting his masters.

That case of Sir W. Casement's will which was mentioned to you has been tried and decided against us, and the will has been set aside, as we anticipated. I was much disappointed in my own arguments on the occasion, but was greatly surprised at being complimented by those who heard my speech. But, on the Judges whose appreciations of it are of the most importance, it made, alas! but very little impression. This is just the busiest time of the year for us; next month will be a great contrast to it, as two of our Judges are going to Ceylon in the same steamer which carries Lord Ellenborough, and there will be very little doing then, so that I must postpone my longer letters till then. It is fortunate that Richmond got his present good appointment before Lord Ellenborough's departure, for I don't think it likely that Sir Henry will have the same firmness to elevate young men. Lord E. promised to exert himself to get John Shakespear a lift from the new Governor General. I have not heard for some days from our John, but when last I heard he was famously well, only lamenting over the fate of his gallant steed, which had died one fine morning.

And now farewell for the month, my dearest father, and believe me,

Your ever affectionate son,

W. R.

*To his Mother*

*July 14, 1844.*

Life passes on here with a degree of sameness which in a great European city is utterly unknown, which arises principally, I think, from your seeing the self-same Euro-

peans every day, and from your not noticing the differences of the natives which pass under your eye on successive days. You cannot think how I should delight to see a crowd of people of all classes in a London or a Paris street again. There may be something more *distingué* in moving about in a vehicle among a crowd of dusky beings, who look up to you as belonging to a higher race; but the independence of walking in a crowd of your own countrymen (and women *surtout*) appears here very enviable. But I was going to say, when I thus digressed, that the monotony of which I speak is a very happy one, and which one does not really like to be disturbed. The only time when I regret it is when the period of writing to Europe comes round and then one is compelled upon a monthly retrospect to confess how barren of incidents one's life is. In the reviews given me by Mrs. Halliday, and in other books of which I get an excellent supply, I find an inexhaustible fund of interest and amusement for myself. What a blessing is a love for literature, and what a citizen of the world, in point of independence of place, does it make one! I stick rigidly to the rule of never looking at law for an instant after dinner, and find greatly the benefit of that regulation. I sometimes look back with wonder (I cannot say with admiration) upon the days when, immediately after dinner at dear old Albany Street, I used to trudge down with the excellent Hugh Hill to the Temple—there to remain till the chimes of midnight. What happy days those were, but the future promises as happy days I trust to all of us, though in a distant land. I never have, on the whole I think, enjoyed myself so much as when most employed. Even pleasure derives an additional zest from it, and I find now that the only time when my spirits ever sink is when I have to be unemployed for several days together.

*To Miss Trimmer, 12, St. George's Terrace, Hyde Park*

CALCUTTA, July 14, 1844.

. . . Your doubt as to Queen's Counsel is one I don't wonder at. Know that there is no such dignity at

our Bar, the Advocate General being the only one who takes any other precedence than that of his standing at the Bar. At present, Prinsep, Dickens and Leith are the only regular leaders, Morton only occasionally. Criminal cases are the only occasions when we have a jury to address, all the civil cases being tried by the three judges without the intervention of a jury. We have been defeated in the case of Sir W. Casement's will, which, as I told you<sup>1</sup> I anticipated, was held invalid on account of an informality discovered by the next of kin in the mourning coach which conveyed him to the testator's grave. I took much pains in preparing the best argument I could, but my poor argument was constantly questioned by the Chief Justice, upon whom I could see it made very little impression—in short, I didn't get through it half as well as I had hoped and sat down much disheartened and disappointed. To my great surprise, however, both my good-natured leader, Charles Prinsep, and my friend and opponent Leith, and the friends of Her Ladyship, all paid the speech compliments which it was very far from deserving, and proclaimed it to be the best then made. Unfortunately, however, it made very little impression upon those whose approbation was of far greater importance, and I felt far more vexed at having failed in impressing them favourably than pleased at the praise so kindly but unworthily bestowed by more patient listeners.

One quality of a practised advocate I certainly have not yet attained, that namely of shaking off the recollection of a cause as soon as it is over, and dropping the anxiety about it as soon as anxiety ceases to be of any avail. I am ever fighting my battles over again in my own mind, and alas! always too late, thinking of the means by which I might have managed them better had they occurred to me in time.

The political news brought by the last mail was indeed exciting and worthy the name of news.<sup>2</sup> The first feeling that prevailed in Calcutta on hearing it was, I think, rather one of satisfaction that pride had had a fall. The next

<sup>1</sup> See page 136.

<sup>2</sup> The recall of Ellenborough by the Court of Directors of the E.I. Company. The Directors ceased to consider the Empire safe in his hands, and, in spite of the remonstrances of his friends in the Ministry, determined to exercise the powers they had refused to part with during the recent Charter discussions, and to recall him.



one, of regret that a man who certainly has many good, and some great qualities, and who appeared to be on the point of settling down soberly for the real benefit of India, should be cut short in his schemes of improvement. This feeling was much increased by the reports of the Duke's speech, which reached us two or three days before any of the other speeches on the subject, and which showed such confidence in the real governing power of India as to throw a heavy burthen of responsibility upon the nominal Governors, the Directors. But when the bulk of the newspapers arrived, containing speeches which, if not so chivalrous, were at least as rational as the Duke's, and above all when it appeared that there was an hesitation on the part of Government to produce the papers, while the Court of Directors were only anxious that it should be done, the tide of feeling again turned, and I think now the great majority of voices would be found in support of the course adopted by the Court. If the government do not produce the papers, it is very clear they must contain some acts or (more probably) sayings of the Lord which cannot be defended by any ingenuity, and if so, it is equally clear that the Directors, as long as they have nominally the empire of India vested in them, have acted the only manly part open to them by exercising the real power which they still possess.

Among the Military, however, there is a strong feeling in his favour, as might be expected, and I suspect the last Governor General whom as a body they would wish to have is a tried old soldier like Sir H. Hardinge, whose ideas of military subordination must be strict and who has seen too much of fighting on a large scale (he is a Peninsular veteran) to go to war only for fighting's sake.

My last letter gave you an account of the persecution at the Eton dinner of the worthy man who now enjoys the temporary splendour of the Governor-Generalship. He has indeed had his revenge more rapidly than he could have then anticipated. He has rather risen in my estimation by his conduct towards Lord E. since the news of the recall. For he does not (as he would and might have done had he been, what I have sometimes thought him, an ass) kicked up his heels at the dying lion. On the contrary, he has shown him every mark of respect, and

ordered that all the honours, etc., should be paid him until his departure. This is really magnanimous, for by so doing he strips himself during the short period of his G. Governorship of all the outward attributes of that great office to which he is entitled, and which he can never have another opportunity of enjoying—his military bands, aides-de-camp, Government House, etc., all of which one would imagine dear to the heart of a pompous civilian during his little day of supreme greatness. It would, I think, have been more considerate in the late great man to decline some of these on that account.

The military alone are about to give him a farewell entertainment about which much discussion has been going on. The more thinking among them are anxious that the rest of the community should be admitted to join in giving the party, but the more numerous section among them, who delighted in Lord E.'s professions of exclusive fondness for the military, annulled the proposition and determined on making it exclusively military. Now although the Civil part of the Society would willingly have joined in any general entertainment to Lord E., yet they have too fast in their memory the arrogant and almost insulting manner in which he treated them upon the last occasion of a civil party to him, to invite him to another. Indeed it would be absurd to do so, and therefore the only parting demonstration he will receive is to be a purely military one. This is on two accounts injudicious. First, because it will confirm the idea prevalent at home to his prejudice that the only class of the whole community who are satisfied with him is the Army, which is not really the case to the extent to which it is believed, for many others admire his disinterestedness and energy. And, secondly, it places the army in a false position, as it is a received military maxim that no corps or body of soldiers shall make any public demonstration in favour of an officer whose conduct has met with the displeasure of his superiors. Some are foolish enough to say that the ministry at home support and honour Lord E. and so therefore may the troops here. But surely the Indian Army, while they receive pay and orders from the Directors, who are alone their masters, have no right to mark their preference for the Home ministry.

*To his Father**September 17, 1844.*

I was very much gratified to hear the other day from John that he had passed in the Hindostanee, that being the colloquial language of the country, which rendered him eligible to command a company. This I trust he may soon get, and thereby a good increase of pay. He is to go up for another language, the Urdu, or classical of the Persians, in November, and if he passes in that he will be eligible for any Staff appointment in the country (except an interpretership, which requires passing a third); and when he has achieved that, I have little doubt of Richmond's interest getting him into the Gwalior Contingent, which will be a capital thing for him. It is a great thing to have made the first step, and I heartily rejoice at it. He seems to be grown a very fine fellow, and to become with years more considerate and thoughtful—a great point.

*To his Mother**October 18, 1844.*

Since I last wrote you I have made acquaintance with Sir George Pollock, the General, and brother of Sir Frederick. He has seen John at Lucknow during the visit of the latter, and spoke highly of him as a fine young man. You will hear by that gallant ensign of the fortune of war having called him to Dacca, perhaps the most peaceful station in India, which will recommend it to you, though scarcely to him. It is also a very healthy and nice station, more pleasant in point of society than the present one. The march is an extremely long one, as a glance at a map of India will show, but it will be performed very comfortably by water; altogether the change appears a desirable one. I trust that after he passes his second examination in the languages, which he cannot now do till March on account of this change, he may, through Richmond's kind interest, get some staff appointment at Gwalior.

*To Miss Trimmer**CALCUTTA, November 19, 1844.*

MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,

. . . My time is as fully occupied as ever, latterly by

no means in a profitable, tho' in a prominent manner—as during the absence at Singapore of my friend, Prinsep, the Senior of our Bar, I have been acting for him as Standing Counsel (which he is) to the Government and have been conducting the criminal prosecutions at the Sessions. This has been a laborious, but a new and interesting employment to me—for on former occasions, tho' several times engaged for the defence of prisoners, I have never discharged the sterner duty of prosecuting, and, on the whole, I have tolerable success, and every reason to be satisfied with the task.—In one case only did I feel any anxiety to obtain a conviction, and left no stone unturned to do so. It was one enveloped in great mystery and attended with some feature of great doubt and peculiar atrocity, where a wealthy Brahmin with a male and female associate were accused of making away with an unfortunate woman of good family, who had formed a most unhappy attachment to the Brahmin. After she had been missing six weeks, a body was found buried in a house in the heart of Calcutta, far from her home, and in a state such as to make recognition next to impossible. There was no direct evidence against the prisoners, but strong circumstantial proofs, and though I had not the least moral doubt in my own mind of the poor woman having in some manner met with foul play from the Brahmin, I, in common with all others, I believe, who know the case at all, thought the chances of an acquittal very great. By great exertions (in suggesting inquiries in every quarter where information was likely to be gained) during the trial I managed to make the case, which at first appeared a weak, a strong one, and had the satisfaction of seeing link after link added to the chain of circumstances until, on the afternoon of the third day, it became next to impossible to doubt of the guilt of the principal, and notwithstanding the effort of his counsel, he and his family associate were found guilty by the jury at ten o'clock of that night—the trial having lasted from Monday at ten in the morning till the Wednesday night. The Brahmin was transported for life and the woman for 15 years—and really the former deserved his fate, which the natives had imagined his wealth and cunning would have been able to ward off.—The judge pronounced the trial the most important and interesting he had known during his experience of many years in India, and I confess I felt



a satisfaction I never thought I should have done in the conviction of a fellow being at the result. But upon the whole the task of a public prosecutor is by no means an agreeable one, and I confess that I feel no sorrow for laying down my gratuitous and to a certain extent invidious labours. For one week they took me entirely away from the less exciting but more lucrative civil business. Our Chief Justice has not yet returned from Ceylon, but is expected daily. His leave has caused some stagnation till now in the civil business—and we shall all be glad of his return.

Since writing last, I have made the acquaintance of Sir George Pollock the general, and brother of Sir Frederick, whom he much resembles in kindness of disposition and talent, though not in animation or conversational ability. He is the most modest, unassuming little man you can imagine, and is more generally liked than any man of note in the country, and certainly no man ever better deserved his honours; he has been very friendly towards me.—A son of Sir Frederick's,<sup>1</sup> once a little boy to whom I gave his first bathing lesson in the country, but now a fine young ensign, came out the other day. He is very like one of his sisters whose character I used to admire greatly, and whom I should have admired still more had I not known a certain other young lady.—These meetings and revivals of old recollections are most agreeable and happily are now frequent.

### *To his Mother*

*November 20, 1844.*

. . . I see a youth (a native) from Ceylon here occasionally, who is studying for the Church at the Bishop's College at Calcutta, and who speaks most highly of Langslow here. He says all the natives are much attached to him and respect him more than any other Judge or Magistrate in the land, and that they think that the English Government dislike him because he is cleverer than any of them and quite independent. The latter unfortunately cannot be denied, but I greatly fear the suffrages of the good people of Ceylon have been won rather by Langslow's bold assertion of popular maxims than by his excellence as a Judge.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Major-General Sir Richard Pollock, K.C.S.I., died 1899.

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, December 21, 1844.

My only present source of any uneasiness is the chance of certain very important alterations taking place in the Queen's Courts in India, which were recommended by the Board called the Law Commission, who have been sitting for the last ten years without doing much, but which has at last published a report advising some very sweeping and some ridiculous changes in the constitution of the Courts, the effect of which, if carried out, would be to diminish very much the respectability of them and the business of the practitioners. However, it is utterly impossible that these changes should be adopted in their present stage, as it is beyond the power of the Government here to interfere in any way with our jurisdiction. An application must be made to the Parliament at home, who have too much sense to sanction for a moment the more extravagant of the proposed measures, and who set a far higher value upon the careful administration of justice than the Company's Government appears to do. Several years indeed must elapse before any important alteration can take place at all, and there is little reason to fear that whatever changes do take place will materially injure our profession; but it is vexatious to see persons entrusted with so responsible a trust at such an immense cost as the Law Commissioners broaching such impracticable doctrines and showing so petty a jealousy of the only authority in the country which at all keeps in check that of the Company. In the Company's Courts, which prevail everywhere, except in the Presidency Towns, the administration of justice is very uncertain and irregular, depending little on any fixed laws, but fluctuating greatly, according to the disposition of the judges of the time being, but they have one specious advantage over ours in appearance, that the proceedings in them at their early stages are far less costly. In the end, however, they are generally as expensive, if not more so, for in nearly every case there is an appeal to the Sudder, or principal Company's Court at Calcutta. The judges in this Court are chosen indiscriminately, with very little regard to fitness, some of whom have been revenue officers or Commissioners all their days and have never looked at a law book before their elevation to the Bench.

Hence the contrast between their laxity and, be it whispered, ignorance, and the learning and ability of the Queen's judges, who are always trained and generally able lawyers, is very great, and excites much invidious feeling on the part of the less thinking of the Civil servants, who in other respects are lords paramount of the East. It is annoying to find that the will to injure us is not wanting on the part of those who should be above such false prejudices, though I trust they have not the power to carry that will into effect. I read this morning a long address by a renegade brother of the long robe to a meeting of aspiring babus, who constitute a kind of young Calcutta, and who branches into every kind of exaggeration and invective against his own Court and of praise of the wisdom of the changes recommended. . . .

*To his Father*

*December 23, 1844.*

MY DEAREST FATHER,

A measure had been recommended by the Law Commissioners, which, if adopted in its present form, may greatly diminish the profit of the Calcutta bar, and to the fate of which therefore I shall look with much interest. This is a complete change of the structure of the Queen's Courts in this country, merging them to a considerable extent in those of the Company's. Macaulay,<sup>1</sup> the most unpractical man that can be, and the bitterest enemy of English law, being though a wonderfully clever fellow in other matters, having neither taste nor patience for his own profession, the bar, was the originator of this scheme, and his mantle has fallen upon a Mr. McCanceen [*sic*], a disciple of Jeremy Bentham's, and a complete visionary. I do not believe there is a chance of their present scheme being carried through in anything like its present shape, for the good sense of an English Parliament would at once laugh out of

<sup>1</sup> See chapter vi of Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, in which the work of the Law Commission is discussed. In one of his letters (Aug. 25, 1835, to Ellis) Macaulay says: "I ought, however, to tell you that, the more progress I make as a legislator, the more intense my contempt for the mere technical study of law becomes." Holding such sentiments, which, we may be sure, he did not conceal, it may be imagined that Macaulay was not a *persona grata* to the Calcutta Bar.

the house the proposed College of Justice and "Code of Natural Law and Equity."

The Government here (men in whose judgment in a matter of this kind not the least reliance can be placed), being most prejudiced in favor of the Company's, that is their own officers, and patronage, and very ignorant on the subject, would probably sweep away the Queen's Courts altogether if they could, but happily that rests with the English Parliament.

Sir Henry Hardinge is in every way a complete contrast to his predecessor, Lord Ellenborough, for while the latter chafed at all advice from the well-paid servants of the Company, the present Governor-General has hitherto appeared a complete cipher in their hands.

*To Miss Trimmer*

June 2, 1845.

MY OWN EVER DEAREST AUGUSTA,

I have been very much pleased within the last two or three days at meeting a young man whom I knew five years ago in England. He is a brother of Mrs. W. Thackeray's and was staying with her when I first knew them. His name is Shawe, he is in the army and going home, hoping to find there promotion, and better still, *entre nous*, a wife. He sails in the "Bentinck," which will carry this letter, and I have told him of my approaching happiness and he has promised to call on you as soon as he gets to town. If you should come overland, his experience may be of use to you; if not, I know you will be glad to see one who has lately left me and for whom I have a real regard. You will also probably have seen his sister lately in Paris, and, as he cannot go there for five or six weeks after his arrival, he will be very glad of the opportunity of learning how she is. He is most fondly attached to her, as is another brother of his and hers, who has also come to Calcutta just now to give his brother the meeting. The elder one is a young civilian, whom I narrowly escaped receiving a brief to prosecute some time since in the Supreme Court, upon an accusation of some natives of having abused his magisterial powers to maltreat and plunder them. The Counsel, however, in whose absence



I should have been retained, returned in time, and the prosecutions (there were two) terminated in the fullest and most honourable acquittal of Shawe, and in the exposure of the wickedness and falsehood of the accusers. Others who were tried with him had, without his knowledge, committed some trifling outrage on these people, and would probably have been convicted, but for the indignation of the jury at the false charge against poor Shawe, so that they owe their escape to his being falsely accused. But I had not the most distant idea of his being brother to the little woman you know. . . .

The two following letters from W. Thackeray, alluding to my father's success in Calcutta, were written to Charlotte Ritchie.

ALEXANDRIA, *October 23, 1844.*

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

. . . Yesterday at Cairo I met a little attorney, an old schoolfellow of mine, whom I enjoined to give all the briefs possible to William ; and he spoke in very respectful terms of that judicial authority, as did several other Calcutta people who were at Cairo on their way out or home.

"There is no news of the Carmichaels<sup>1</sup> coming home just yet : he has only leave to come as far as Calcutta as yet. If you know where my people are, will you let them have the last news of my well-doing ? After Jerusalem, Cairo and the Pyramids. Many of our party have had touches of fever and delirium, but, thank God, as yet I have not had a greater ill than sea-sickness—and oh ! I don't like to think of twenty days and the Bay of Biscay in November ! God bless you, my dear Charlotte, and thank you all again and again for your kindness. I must pack up my letter and carry it ashore. I shall not be long after it, please God, in honest Christian parts.

Yours ever affectionately,

W. M. THACKERAY.

*Malta, October 28.*—Going to Italy after fifteen days' quarantine. Please a line to Poste Restante, Naples.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Richmond Thackeray had married Major Carmichael-Smith after Richmond Thackeray's death.

1845.

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

“ . . . So Augusta has sailed to her William. Happy rogue! Everybody who comes from Calcutta brings the best accounts of him and his popularity and his talents and his prosperity. The old Cambridge men I met continuously ask, “How is Gentleman Ritchie?” I hope he’ll be as rich as Follett. Poor Mr. Langslow comes to me of a morning and talks of his own case and the Baron de Bode. The Hallidays I see from time to time, very gay and jolly and kind. I’ve not been able to see them much of late, though, on account of the business in the morning and the engagements at night. But the season’s over now, thank God: and I shall get a little quiet and leisure. I have been bothering my brains for a fortnight over a chapter about Jerusalem. Good-bye, dear Charlotte. What a comfort you and yours have been to me! That’s what I think every day.

Your affectionate

W. M. T.

*From Mr. Sinnett, the Senior Member of the Calcutta Bar,  
to William Ritchie*

The following enthusiastic letter is undated, but may have been written about 1845:

MY DEAR RITCHIE,

Don’t think me officious—but I cannot resist the impulse that leads me to give vent to my feelings.

How often has one splendid effort raised a young man to attain at once the place in his profession that want of opportunity alone retarded.

I am the oldest man in the profession. I have witnessed talents of very varied character. . . .

I venture to say that henceforth you will be sought as a leader. I will answer for myself. I have a strong opinion, and I will maintain that a more powerful address to a Jury—one better arranged, one of closer reasoning and teeming with sounder logic—one more eloquent or more judicious—one showing more painstaking to master every minute ingredient of a client’s case, every feature and

bearing of it, was never uttered within the walls of this Court by Ferguson himself. 'Tis this painstaking that will ever command the confidence of the Profession.

How beautifully you alluded to the absence of the *good* that Peterson's *unhappy* allusion to Pandora's Box failed to exhibit as a Hope to his wretched Client. How you *demolished, crushed*, and tore into shreds every one of his points; you left not a wraith behind. The only chance he had of saving his professional reputation was to have thrown up his brief in disgust at the convicted Perjury of his Client.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. SINNETT.

*To Miss Trimmer*

CALCUTTA, January 21, 1845.

. . . I quite dread your being depressed by the monotony of India, which I, being interested in my labours, have never found disagreeable, but which, as I have often said, must I fear be irksome to ladies accustomed to the movement of Europe. Shall you be angry with me for telling you that I begin to find myself as much out of place at a ball as I should be in a pulpit, and to have my doubts whether even your coming will rescue me from the unspeakable dulness of which I am guilty, whenever I go to one, or prevent me from being (what I am unquestionably now) the most stupid and least desirable partner in Calcutta? I shall try hard when you come to persuade myself that this is merely a tribute which I paid involuntarily in your absence to the bygone balls whereat I danced with you, but I much fear that you will find me disqualified as a partner even for you. I wonder whether, if I had remained in England, I should have learned the Polka on purpose to dance with you: the attempt on my part now would be sufficient to justify my friends in applying for a commission of lunacy against me, and, though I am determined to make one attempt at a waltz with you, I fear my movements will be so elephantine as to call for a straight waistcoat or some other bodily restraint.

I must tell you of a compliment that has been paid me lately, which rather flattered my vanity, though it entails considerable trouble without any equivalent. The principal Secretary to Government, who is a very able man, with whom I am but slightly acquainted, and whose name is Halliday,<sup>1</sup> wrote to me the other day telling me that Sir Henry Hardinge was desirous of appointing a committee to report upon the police, magistracy, etc., of Calcutta, and to suggest improvements, and wishing to name me to the great man as member. I accepted, of course, as I think it a duty one owes to any society of which one is a member to make oneself useful to it whenever a clear channel for your being of use is pointed out, and I find that my colleagues are none of my own profession but three civilians (who I need not say are les grands seigneurs here), the Master attendant of the Port, and a very intelligent Native gentleman. The duty is not a very agreeable one and may take up a good deal of time, so that the compliment is as empty a one as could be paid. But I find two or three of my brethren, especially those who have either acted as Magistrates or are candidates for the present vacancy, are disgusted at my having been selected instead of them, and are scarcely reconciled when they find that no emolument is to be gained by it. I need scarce say that I shall not allow it to interfere at all with my professional engagements. . . .

*To his Mother*

March 8, 1845.

I have seen much of our Chief Justice (Sir Lawrence Peel) lately privately and like him more and more. On Sunday last, I paid him a morning visit about 1; he asked me to stay, which I did till past ten at night, and have seldom passed a day in pleasanter company than this tête à tête with the dignitary whom at one time, I remember, I was in great awe of. He has not a prepossessing appearance or manner, and has an irritable temper, but he is as kind a man, as able a Judge, and as pleasant a companion as I have ever met. I have heard nothing of the Langslows for some time, but trust they are prospering. I had the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Frederick Halliday, K.C.B., Lieutenant-Governor, 1854-9.



pleasure of meeting an old schoolfellow the other day, a Captain Munro, who had the most wonderful escape at Maharajpore. Having been shot by a musket ball right through the neck, his life was for a long while despaired of, but he has now quite recovered. The odd part of it was, that he heard himself reported dead to the General, and though apparently senseless and to all appearance a corpse, he was quite sensible of what was going on. He obtained promotion to a captaincy on his recovery; he is a very fine fellow and much more accomplished and better read than the bulk of the military men you meet in India. He is staying with a most agreeable and learned old gentleman, ■ Dane by birth, Dr. Wallock, the Superintendent of the Botanical Garden here—the most delightful appointment to a studious and scientific man. I am going down to pass to-morrow (Sunday) with them at the gardens, and anticipate a very pleasant day.

And now farewell, my dearest. Heaven bless you, prays your ever affectionate son,

W. R.

*To his Father*

June 2, 1845.

MY DEAREST FATHER,

You will, I know, be delighted to hear the good accounts which both John and I have written at some length about ourselves. John is, as I have already said, much improved, and not at all too much disheartened by his temporary failure in the examination. I doubt not he will come out with much credit on the next occasion, when he will be prepared for the kind of examination he has to go through, which before he had no opportunity of knowing. *Entre nous*, I am not very sorry for his not having passed, for I think this little check may do his character a great deal of good. The main defect in it is one very natural at his age, and of which I at twenty years of age had plenty, that of too great self-confidence, and of maintaining his own opinion, without giving himself sufficient trouble to think on the subject. . . .

*To Charlotte**August 7, 1845.*

I quite forgot to tell my darling Charlotte how we celebrated her birthday again this year. The excellent little Governor General gave all the old Etonians a dinner, which went over very merrily and pleasantly, though not quite so boisterous as Lord Ellenborough's last year. Though not an Etonian himself, his two sons were.

*To his Mother**August 18, 1845.*

. . . We had a sad occurrence last night here. Irvine was awakened in the night by a voice which came from the river, crying for help. He went out into the verandah and found it was an English voice crying for a boat from the midst of the river, which runs by the house with fearful rapidity. Irvine's boat, which is always at hand, was immediately pushed off by his directions, and Irvine called to the man, who was apparently swimming stoutly, and showed no exhaustion in his voice, that help was coming—the boat got within two yards of the poor man, the men had already left their oars and held out their arms to take him in, when he suddenly sank to rise no more. He was doubtless caught in one of the eddies or whirlpools which abound in this river. It is not yet discovered who he is, but probably a sailor from one of the ships.

*To his Mother**November 22, 1845.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . This is positively my last letter written (as William Thackeray said) in my present capacity; the next, I trust, will be from William, the married man. And as we are projecting a little eight days wedding trip, either to Dwarka Náth's country house, which is at present unoccupied, or to Ishapore, I shall have the pleasure of . . . what I have not now to tell you of my happiness. I am

so charmed to find my darling's voice as strong and sweet as ever; indeed she is, if possible, improved in every respect since we parted.

*To his Mother*

*December 6, 1845.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

. . . We had the fear that John, who was on his way from Dacca to be present, might arrive too late. The latter fear was, however, unfounded, for he made his appearance on the morning of the 29th, the day we first fixed, travel-stained and weary, but in excellent health and spirits, boldly determined to proceed at once without the least breathing time to church, if the ceremony had not been postponed. But you will be longing to hear as to the first cause I have assigned for the postponement, namely the non-appearance of the box, as I know, after what I wrote in my last, you will have passed a fortnight of agitation in the fear of the box being lost. We passed nearly an equal time under the same agonising feeling, but you will be happy to hear that on the 12th day (just as we were going off in despair to the dreadfully extravagant Madame Gervain's to order things not one-fourth as pretty at four times the price) the lost one was found and borne off by me to the house in triumph. I am quite sorry for the alarm I gave you in my last by imparting my fears about it, but really things appeared so ominous then, the whole of the other passengers' luggage having been got out of the ship, and nothing at all resembling the box presenting any trace, that I had made up my mind for the worst (and well I might, for who could have guessed at the stupidity of the agents?)—The excellent Captain Walker sent to us on the morning of the 12th day that there was a case found among the cargo, which had been shipped as merchandise under a bill of lading to the order of Messrs. Balte & Edwards, and the only directions on which was M. T. Augusta could not recollect the name of the English Agents employed as brokers, but the case being French, we claimed it and the captain gave it up to us, which, as we held no bill of lading, he was not strictly justified in doing. As Augusta had never seen the case, the opening of it was of course one of thrilling excitement, but Madame Lemans had told her

how it was packed, and we saw with delight a *toile cirée* give way to a deal box, that to another deal box, that to a tin case, and lastly to the beautiful dresses which were the pride of Lemans' establishment. Judge of the joy at the discovery and the welcome we gave to the lost one. We felt in good humour with Arthur, though it must be owned, poor man, that he or his employés were guilty of great negligence, for not only was there no address, but freight was paid in London for the box, to which, as passenger's luggage, it was not subject, and no bill of lading had been forwarded by them, although only deliverable to their order. But praise be to the packer, all the things came out quite unscathed, although exposed to the dangerous consignment of a cargo of coal and chalk. Would not my dear Charlotte have trembled had she known this four months ago? But you will be anxious to hear about the wedding, and although I should like at once to give you a full, true and particular account of it, yet I know you won't expect a very long letter from either of us by this mail, considering that we have only been married two days and that our honeymoon holiday is a very short one, scarcely a week in all, and the overland goes out to-night. Suffice, then, for the present to say that everything went off as well as it was possible, and, although it appeared at the time to be a rapid and happy dream, the recollection of it leaves on my mind the sweetest picture of reality that was ever drawn. My sweet Augusta looked quite heavenly—I can find no other word—and never did bridal attire more become a woman than did hers on that happy day. . . . As the question of doubt was whether the wedding should be a private and quiet one, as at home, or on a large scale à l'instar de Calcutta, I also prevailed in giving my voice for the latter, as it seemed better to do at Rome, etc., and as the largest Calcutta wedding is attended with no greater trouble than the smallest, the friends being merely invited to the church to witness the ceremony, and the bride and bridegroom quitting the church as soon as it is over by a private door, and being at once wheeled off to the place of their destination as fast as four horses (for that is the dignity to which Calcutta brides are entitled) can carry them. So we had a party of 150 or 160, nearly all of them nice people, who seemed quite delighted at being asked to witness our happiness, and comprising all the great people



now in Calcutta, the Deputy Governor, Sir Herbert Maddock, the Judges, except, I am sorry to say, Sir Lawrence Peel who was ill and could not come, Members of the Council &c., &c., Sir G. Pollock *inter alias*. You cannot think what kind notes of congratulation they nearly all wrote, accepting my invitation to the wedding. I am quite delighted to find so much cordiality among acquaintances who had always been civil to me, it is true, but from whom one expected no great warmth of feeling.

The day was the most beautiful you can conceive—no great wonder, you will think, in this fine season at Bengal (but the preceding day had been cloudy, and not very comfortable), and no *contretemps* whatever took place. The bridesmaids were no less than six in number, all nice looking, all so pleased and all dressed alike in the fullest costume, in white dresses with blue ribbons. . . .

Nothing could exceed the kindness of the dear Irvines and all under their roof. We had such a nice large family party staying there, Charlotte and Selina and John of Lucknow as well as John of Dacca being all there at the time. The dear old latter John was most kind and affectionate, accompanying me to the Cathedral before any one else arrived, and assisting me to receive the numerous guests on the steps. He sent from Dacca, before he knew he was coming to the wedding, some pretty ornaments for her with which she was quite delighted, and I am charmed at the kind thought. He is looking famously well, and we would not on any account that he should have missed being present. . . .

We are now at a most beautiful place, which I think I have described to you in the days of my bachelorhood, being the garden house of Dwarka Náth Tagore, now in Europe. . . .

## CHAPTER V

1846-49

### LETTERS UP TO THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER

IN 1847 John, "our kind, gallant Johnny," as William describes him, died of fever at Dinapore. William writes :

"On Monday, the 4th, at about noon, our darling breathed his last. . . . His body was interred with all military honours in a pretty spot on the Dinapore burying place . . . and Augusta and I hope to make a pilgrimage of love to the green spot where our dear brother sleeps."

When she was herself dying, Charlotte spoke of this as almost the hardest to bear of all her trials : he had been all alone, and they had received no softening details or message. With the tears rolling down her cheeks, Charlotte quoted the words of the Duchess of Orleans—whose husband died insensible from an accident—"A whole lifetime for one hour's talk."

In March, 1849, occurred the death of William's beloved father. How William appreciated him appears from his letters and constant allusions to him up to the last on December 24, 1860, when he recalls that he is writing on his father's birthday, and says, "How his kind heart would have rejoiced to hear of my position in Council !"

. . . . .

Between the years 1847-60 eight children were born to my parents, and soon the inevitable period came when

it was necessary to send the two eldest daughters home, Gussie and Blanche, aged nearly six and five, in the charge of their cousin, Mrs. Low. Henceforth the letters are full of longing inquiry and acknowledgments of the love their children found in their second home with their aunts.

Following on the departure of the two eldest girls, there came by the overland route from Calcutta two more sets of pilgrims to welcoming arms in Paris. All the natural fountain of mother's love could find outlet with perfect enjoyment in Charlotte's heart. Her mother and Jane also proposed to surround William's children with a mother's love, but all the responsibility, by one consent, seemed to be given to Charlotte, and she at once characteristically began to lay out her time, her plans and her whole self with the devotion which few mothers practise for the charge so precious to her. She determined at once never to sleep away a night from home, and she kept her rule.

Lady Ritchie gives a happy picture of the family life at this time :

"Charlotte cheered up at times, and we were often merry over the reception days, when quite a number used to drop in. There would be rubbers of whist; hating cards, Charlotte was a skilful player and generally devoted herself. Then there was music, or even a dance got up. How well I remember it! Dear Aunt Ritchie looking sweet and pretty in velvet dress—the funny English—the polite French—the solemn whist—the compliments passing—and Félicie, then a young, slim and pretty girl, doing the refreshment part so well. Then the evenings when we were alone, the green-shaded lamp, Janie playing, my Aunt softly humming the tune,—Char. reading or working, and Félicie bringing in the large cups of tea and longing for a chat."

. . . . .

Charlotte and her mother had taken a house in the Rue Godot de Mauroi, a tall, narrow old street, not far from the Madeleine. No. 36 is a big mansion with a *porte-cochère* or doorway to the court and stables, large enough to admit of ■

carriage passing through the paved court on the ground-floor of the house. It was one of those Paris houses that look as if they had as many histories going on within their walls as they have windows looking out in every direction. Our history was a very cheerful, uniform one. We lived on the *troisième*, or third floor. You asked the *concierge* down below if the *troisième* was at home, and, if the answer was encouraging, you ascended the winding, slippery, shiny stairs made of polished walnut. There we were to be found, six English children shut in behind the hall door. Félicie and Annette played a great part in the family history. Annette was a devout old cook, wholly absorbed in her salvation—*faire son salut*. *The Garden of the Soul* always lay upon the kitchen table, and she lived for her mistresses and her church, which was the Madeleine. Félicie, however, was the ruling spirit. She lived forty years in the service of Aunt Charlotte, and before that was often in the house of Mrs. Ritchie, where her mother was cook. The mother was a Bolognese. Félicie, a most capable cook and needlewoman, spared Mrs. Ritchie and her daughters all trouble.

#### LETTERS, 1846-49

##### *To his Father and Mother*

January 7, 1846.

The accounts of the loss on the Frontier are fearful.<sup>1</sup> So many fine young men whom I knew well have fallen. Sir Henry and Sir Hugh between them have completely mismanaged the business, and have suffered themselves to be taken by surprise after long preparations for the last six months, and, after having collected a larger force than ever was under British colours in that part of India, they have been forced into action without half the numbers they might and ought to have had. Poor Pollock's loss is most grievous.

<sup>1</sup> First Sikh War. Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Hugh Gough. The battles of Moodkee and Ferozeshah had just been fought.



*To his Father**January 9, 1846.*

Irvine, who was to have sailed in ten days for England, and who had resigned the service, has received an intimation that his services would be required by the Governor General in the Punjaub, doubtless to act as Chief Engineer in the Field, and instead of going to England, he is to start, as I understand, as soon as he can possibly by his dak for the Frontier. I have as yet not seen any of them since this was known, nor do I know what Mrs. Irvine with the children will do; but this evening I shall see them. It is a high honour, but one which will inflict a deep blow on the future Lady Irvine, for I have little doubt, if he arrives in time for any fighting at all, he will return to England as Sir Archibald. He had, I believe, offered his services before they were required.

*To his Father**February 7, 1846.*

MY DEAREST FATHER,

. . . We have just had intimation of a battle<sup>1</sup> gained by the British, and a decisive one, on the Sutlej over the Sikhs (who have lately had considerable successes, and have grown very bold) by Sir H. Smith, of which, however, we have not yet the authentic particulars, altho' the guns have ceased firing to celebrate it. I received yesterday letter from Irvine from Kurnaul, 13 days dak journey from this; he was just quitting the palankin to march to headquarters, and he bore the journey far better than he had anticipated and wrote in excellent spirits.

*To his Father**February 18, 1846.*

The battle of Sir Harry Smith was extremely well timed, for it has restored the confidence which was beginning to flag in the success of our military operations. They began sadly. Sir Henry Hardinge will obviously not have increased his military fame by his arrangements, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> On January 26, 1846, Sir Harry Smith defeated the Sikhs at Aliwal, and on February 10 at Sobraon.

in the outset. I fancy the great loss of life in the first battle will be heard of at home with the same surprise and indignation as the want of due preparation that led to it.

*To his Mother*

March 7, 1846.

You will hear by the mail of poor Sir Robert Dick's<sup>1</sup> death. A great blow to his family, but certainly there is something far more consoling and less dreadful in falling nobly in the discharge of one's duty than in being the victim of a hateful disease which the exercise of common prudence might have warded off. Sir Robert seems to have acted with great gallantry, led on his division which carried triumphantly the strong entrenchments of the Sikhs. Happily no more valuable lives will be lost in this disastrous campaign, the success of which may fairly be attributed under providence to the dauntless gallantry of our troops, and not to the skill and foresight of their leaders. Sir Henry Hardinge's military reputation seems in the general opinion here likely to suffer considerably, and Sir Hugh Gough, the Commander in Chief, a kind good man, as brave as a lion, who had no reputation as a general to lose, has certainly not added to his. Four pitched battles<sup>2</sup> without the least attempt at tactics in which the enemy who had been suffered to take up a much stronger position, thus enabling him solely by mere force and courage and marching our troops with the most deadly loss of life up to the cannon's mouth [*sic*]. All certainly what no one would have expected in the present age, when the superiority of European to Native Troops is established to be so great, and where generally the first object is not to win (for of that we always make certain) but to win with as little loss as possible. Poor John has been longing to serve in the army of the Sutlej, but you will rejoice that his aspirations were not gratified. It will console him for not having got leave to join it that, if he had, he could not have got there till every bit of fighting was over—as Col. Irvine, who

<sup>1</sup> General Sir Robert Dick, K.C.B., who fell at Sobraon, commanding the 3rd Infantry Division, was a distinguished Peninsular and Waterloo officer. Brother-in-law of Mrs. W. F. Dick, sister to Mrs. Irvine.

<sup>2</sup> First Sikh War: battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Aliwal and Sobraon.

started much sooner than he could have done and made prodigious haste, only arrived on the eve of the battle.

*To his Father*

March 7, 1846.

It was very fortunate that Irvine should have arrived just before the last great battle, and he has gained great credit by his moderation in not taking the command to which he was entitled, which, however, he could scarcely have done with propriety. I fear, however, that in one point of view it may be unfortunate, as, if he had commanded the engineers on that day, he might perhaps have had the honour of a K.C.B. conferred upon him, for which, however, neither he nor Mrs. Irvine would care much. I truly trust he may reach England safe soon after the receipt of this letter. But I am as yet uncertain whether he can go down the Indus and thus home by way of Bombay, which if he can he will do without returning to Calcutta.

*To his Mother*

April 18, 1846.

The new Advocate-General Colvile<sup>1</sup> is a pleasant and a superior man, whose society I like much.

*To his Mother*

May 9, 1846.

John very much improves in appearance, really quite a fine young officer. He seemed to enjoy his stay and we were so glad Augusta got quite well before he went. Col. Irvine left in excellent spirits; never had man better earned an honourable and happy retirement. The Governor General wrote him a farewell letter with his own hand in the most complimentary terms that could be addressed to a retiring officer.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Colvile, afterwards Sir James, was appointed straight from the English Bar to the Advocate-Generalship. He became Chief Justice in 1855, and was a life-long friend of our parents.

*To his Father*

June 1, 1846.

I am delighted to think you took so strong an interest in the late warfare in the Punjaub, which was indeed most interesting. Sir Hugh and Sir Henry got more credit at home for their military achievements than is usually awarded to them here. And all military new comers (at least those that I have seen) are of opinion that the desperate gallantry of the Troops alone won for us the victory, and that the slaughter of these was at least threefold what it needed to have been.

*From Lieutenant John Ritchie to Mrs. William Ritchie,  
Middleton Street, Calcutta*

DINAPORE, April 17, 1847.

MY DEAR AUGUSTA,

. . . I will endeavour to think often and more earnestly on the Subject to which you allude, than I regret to say I have been in the habit of doing. At the same time I confess, I think that, if a person feels conscious of doing his duty in the station of life in which he is placed, he is not called upon to be perpetually brooding on such gloomy subjects as the death of people he loves, or of his own. Such thoughts I think almost sinful, if dwelt upon too constantly, as they appear to me to show a want of reliance on Providence. Besides, we are told to take no thoughts for the morrow. However, I think there is a vast deal of difference between always being thinking of death & judgment, and doing so too seldom or too lightly—and the first is of course far preferable to the latter, and I fear I am far more likely to commit the latter fault, than the former one. . . .

*To his Father and Mother*

ESPLANADE, CALCUTTA, May 3, 1848.

MY DEAREST FATHER AND MOTHER,

. . . We have been both made very happy & very sad since we last wrote by seeing dear Col. Carmichael & by



seeing him only so transiently. . . . What a fine, noble old gentleman he is—and how overflowing with the milk of human kindness! He takes home to you the Bible & Prayer-book of our beloved John, which I have been so long waiting to send you, & which I know you & his dear Sisters will prize beyond any other memento that I could send you. The Bible is that which you gave him before sailing for India, & the Prayer-book & New Testament & lessons were bought by him, poor dear fellow, when last he was in Calcutta, a few months before his untimely death! . . .

I am much affected by one of the verses of W. T.'s *Bouillabaisse*, which is full of tenderness & beauty. *Pennennis* is, I think, charming, & it and *Vanity Fair* entirely eclipse any of the later productions, even of Dickens. . . .

*From Charlotte Ritchie to William Ritchie, Middleton Street, Calcutta*

PARIS, July 24, 1848.

MY DEAREST WILLIAM,

Our hearts are very sad at the non-arrival of our dear India letters, but the monsoon is doubtless the cause of this delay. We are all safe and well, and Paris presents a different aspect than when last we wrote to you. It is now generally acknowledged that the losses were at first greatly exaggerated, and every precaution has been taken for the maintenance of public peace and order. I am afraid you may be prejudiced against Cavaignac by the English Papers, which seem indignant at his arbitrary measures against the French Papers, but indeed they are very necessary at present. Mr. Coquerel made a speech on Saturday against Clubs, and most of the papers say it was very sensible and to the purpose. We shall only have Galignani's notice of it to-morrow, and I wanted to send you a french paper, but it is a violent republican one, and so full of abuse of our poor friend's proposition that Jane would not let me send it you, though I am sure you would have been entirely of Mr. Coquerel's opinion. Papa had bought a paper containing a plan of Paris during the insurrection, but, as it is not a regular newspaper, the Post would not let us send it. The drawings of the *Illustration* are very good

views of those parts of Paris which we visited, and they say the scenes of fighting and of the barricades (which happily we did not see) are also well represented. The Irvines seem to have derived great benefit from their trip to the North. Jane Shawe is going out to her brother with Col. Carmichael in Sept., so that if the dear Sire still perseveres in his intention of paying you a visit we should wish it to be by the same steamer. We are deeply grieved at the last news from Ireland, as we had hoped that the misery and general ruin caused by the events in France would have served as a salutary warning to all those disposed to create disturbances else-where. . . .

*From William Ritchie to his Father*

CALCUTTA, March 8, 1849.

*Received April 18.*

MY BELOVED FATHER,

. . . You will have heard the details of the last battle<sup>1</sup> gained by Ld. Gough—really a glorious one, as the old man had the glory of conquering his own impetuous, fiery disposition in suffering himself to act according to the dictates of caution & prudence, & the result has been a most decisive victory with comparatively very little bloodshed—a great blessing.—Richmond had the narrowest escape that ever mortal had (so writes John the day after the battle), a round shot (i.e. I believe a six-pound cannon ball) having grazed his cheek & carried off the tip of his finger, while in the act of laying a gun against the enemy. He retained the command of the battery with his usual gallantry to the end of the day—& is doing as much as possible. . . .

*Charlotte's Account of her Father's Death*

1849.

. . . The Indian letters arrived, and he listened with delight to his Son's dear letter, and was much rejoiced to hear that his eldest grandchild was better. He spoke much also of the news of the Army, and longed to hear whether another battle had taken place. When the Doctor came

<sup>1</sup> Goojerat.

he asked if he might not have a little brandy & water, in which he drank to the health of his Son in India. . . .

Next morning we were let return to his room, and he looked so beautiful in his calm and peaceful sleep ! so free from pain, so full of bliss ! Oh, it was a great, great mercy to see him thus, and, could you but have seen him, my dearest William, you would have rejoiced at his sweet, calm and happy expression. Dr. Bertin said he died the death of the righteous, so free from pain. We said that we had had no prayers or religious preparation for these last moments. Oh, said he, the best preparation was the virtuous life he has always led. We sent to get his likeness modelled, and the man said he had never seen so beautiful and peaceful a countenance. . . .

*To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, May, 1849.

MY BELOVED MOTHER AND SISTERS,

. . . Surely all our father's virtues were those of a true follower of Christ, not those of the ambitious or worldly men-pleaser. "And blessed are ye that mourn, for you shall be comforted,"—and such holy sorrow as ours is for our pure and gentle Emily, our kind, gallant Johnny, and our guileless, noble-minded father is sure to find a blessing from Him who spake such gracious words to us on earth and whose infinite love looks down and cares for us from Heaven. . . . The marks of sympathy and kindness you met with on every side are indeed most gratifying, and such tributes as these are among the blessings that virtues like my father's confer not only on the possessor but on all dear to him. I am more affected than I can tell you by the accounts of the funeral, and of the three poor men who followed our beloved father's remains to their earthly resting-place. God bless and support them, poor men. I quite love them for it. . . .

## CHAPTER VI

1850-53

### LETTERS UP TO THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER

THE Paris party was now to be reduced by the loss of William's mother. A picture of Mrs. Charlotte Ritchie has been left by Lady Ritchie :

" I loved my great-aunt Ritchie, as who did not love that laughing, loving, romantic, handsome, humorous, indolent old lady ? Shy, expansive in turn, she was big and sweet-looking, with a great look of my father. Though she was old when I knew her, she would still go off into peals of the most delightful laughter, just as if she were a girl."

The poetic life and fire lasted on, though her poetical effusions had been broken off and found other flow than that of verse as the journey drew to its end.

One autumn day, the bright, vivid woman of seventy came in from her walk in the Champs Élysées partly paralysed. " Ah ! Félicie," she said, " life is still sweet to me, but I feel that God is calling me to lay down what I love so much." She died without loss of mental power in 1854, four years after her husband. After twelve years of separation, she was never to see her eldest son again. How this weighed upon my father appears in his letters of deepest sympathy and consolation to his sisters.

In the year 1855 my father and mother came home in April, bringing with them a son and daughter. They stayed in the Rue Godot in Paris, in London at 36 Onslow Square with the Thackerays, and at Sandown with Mrs.





LADY RITCHIE, NÉE ANNE ISABELLA THACKERAY.  
(*Photo by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, London.*)

1000

1000

Trimmer.<sup>1</sup> With the two eldest children they travelled in Scotland. At the end of October they returned to India. This spell of seven months, with the exception of a few weeks in 1859, was all the holiday my father ever took in Europe. They left behind in Paris the four eldest children, returning to the two little boys they had left in Calcutta.

It was well said of my father that it was "■ the mouth-piece of his fellow-citizens, holding the brief of charity, or of national gratitude, that he shone brightest. . . . On those occasions the late William Ritchie was truly proud. His commanding figure towered above those around him, and he looked—and his auditors very well knew his looks did not belie him—the very impersonation of the good citizen."

#### LETTERS, 1850-53

##### *To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, May 3, 1850.

MY DEAREST MOTHER AND SISTERS,

. . . We had a sad trial last week—the illness of our good excellent Mrs. Hay—and our house was nearly being one of mourning instead of, as it happily is, full of deep thankfulness and gratitude. She was attacked on Saturday night with what proved in the morning to be cholera. Happily the symptoms were from the first favourable, and we all along had great confidence that she would recover, and, thank God, she did so, and recovered her strength afterwards wonderfully well. I don't know whether I have ever before remarked to you, but I have observed since I have been in India, and the experience of others confirms me, that generally when this dreadful disease first breaks out among the Europeans, it is most malignant and fatal, and no medical assistance, however prompt or skilful, seems of much avail. When it has prevailed and had its way for some weeks the mysterious disease appears to abate its virulence, and if proper measures are taken in time the patient generally escapes. As it has been

<sup>1</sup> Augustus Richmond's mother.

prevailing so long (since the beginning of March) this year, we had from the first good hopes, which happily have been realized. . . .

*To his Wife*

ARACAN, May 15, 1850.

10 min. to 5 a.m.!!!

Here we are all safe and delightfully well after a very pleasant and prosperous voyage so far. We got in here at 1/2 past 10 last night, and start again at 1/2 past 7 this morning. And I have risen before five to go ashore and look about me a little and also to write these lines to my darling Guss, who I know will be anxiously looking out for them. We have had beautiful weather, and got all safe from the Pilot Station on Monday morning at 4 o'clock, having had to encounter a heavy head sea in working to the Pilot Station, so that we made a very fair run afterwards to get in here by last night. We have had wonderfully fine weather, and although on Sunday night and Monday there was rather a heavy swell on, and the good ship rolled a great deal, disturbing the comfort of one's interior and rendering dressing in one's cabin a hateful process, we have had no wind whatever to hurt us, and have had as beautiful weather and as calm a sea since Monday as we could have had in the cold weather.

7 a.m.—I have just returned from shore after a most interesting little expedition. Captain Phayre, the Commissioner, was kind enough to lend me his buggy—and after seeing him at his house, which was the poor Crawfords', I drove to see poor dear Charlotte's grave.<sup>1</sup> It is situated in one of the most beautiful spots that can be imagined, on the raised ground near the river, with a beautiful view of the hills on the other side and of the sea beyond the light-house. The tomb is in excellent preservation—and I read with much emotion the inscription which comprises the last verse of the hymn which the poor missionaries sung over her grave. I think he will be grateful to hear the account I shall be able to give him of the resting-place of his sweet and gentle wife. The place is full of melancholy association to me as I thought of their last ride along the road by which we were driving,

<sup>1</sup> His cousin, Charlotte Shakespear, married to James Crawford. She died at Ak-yab in 1849, leaving eight children.



and of your having so shortly before left them and so full of comfort in the house I visited. But independently of these melancholy thoughts, there is something very pleasing about the place, and the hills and rocks are quite beautiful.

We went to a place called the Facqueer's rock, which commands a fine view of the sea-coast and sea, and which all the sailors of the East look on with reverence, as retaining the footsteps of a saint which we traced.

We afterwards went to see the unfortunate M—— ship, which lies ashore with a frightful hole in her bottom, and we then went round the station and got back here before the sun became too powerful. It is quite refreshing to see the fine bold rocks and hills and the whole outline of the bold coast after not having seen any higher hill than that in Sir L. Peel's garden for nearly 8 years.

At 1/2 past 8 or 9 we hope to start and get into Kyouk Phoo, and off again this evening and be at Moulmein on Sunday morning, as the weather still promises to be most propitious. I feel stronger and better than I can describe, and am heartily glad that I took my dear little woman's advice and persisted in making the trip. Our party is very pleasant, the Captain most kind and attentive, and his table really excellent—the only one which when on board a ship, and squeamish, has not given offence to one's qualmish appetite. He kindly got for me the loan of the Commissioner's buggy, which gave me so agreeable a drive. . . .

*To his Wife*

KYOUK PHOO, May 15, 1850.

½ past 8 p.m.

We are unexpectedly detained here till to-morrow at daybreak, so that I have time to write you a second letter to-day, two letters in one day being more than I thought it possible for me to achieve, though I can assure you I find the performance not only easy but delightful.

We got in here at about half-past five, but the good Captain did not like to venture out again after dark, so here again we lie at anchor for the night. I have been quite repaid for the detention, though, by the most charming walk you can conceive, first for about 2 miles

along the beach towards the sea, on the most beautiful, firm, elastic sand, with the waves breaking playfully at one's feet, and a lovely sea-breeze blowing into the beautiful bay: then turning off through the station, which though low is exceedingly pretty, abounding in fine old trees and in picturesque clumps of new ones, planted as in a park or garden. Such a charm did I find in the walk that, after my companions had returned in this boat to the ship, I could not resist remaining behind and walking for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour more along the beach, now lighted up by the beautiful young moon which shone so sweetly on the bright glistening sands and the waves as they broke on the beach. I don't know when I have felt so much sentiment, or still better devotion, as in my solitary moonlight walk. There is always something in the sea beach and breaking of the waves on it which seems to rouse one's better nature in one, and to make one feel one's own nothingness, or rather one's wretched selfishness and worldliness, and an aspiration after something better and holier—and I feel that I should be a better man, dearest, if I could more often indulge in the feelings which came across me in my lonely walk, and which, alas! though I often long for them, I feel it most difficult to call up in the bustle and turmoil of one's daily calling. But all is for the best, and it is melancholy to think that this beautiful spot, with its sea breeze so pure and apparently invigorating, should be so unhealthy to European life. The great lowness of the houses is one chief cause for this. But it will interest you to hear all this about places you have been at, though I don't suppose you saw so much of them as I.

The weather has continued beautiful, and we had a most interesting day's sail from Akyab here. The doubling the different rocks and hills, and observing the change of form they assume from our change of position as we pass between the lighthouses and double the rock called the Savage Rock (and truly so called) is quite exciting, and I nearly sacrificed my breakfast to my admiration of the scenery, as I could not bring myself to leave the bridge till we had fairly lost sight of Akyab.

It will now be Sunday evening before we reach Moulmein, and I suppose we shall leave it again on Friday. No more sea-sickness to-day, indeed a perfect calm, though a heavy



WILLIAM RITCHIE.





swell from the late gale caused the little vessel to roll a good deal. Every prospect of fine weather to Moulmein, and even if it be a little blustering coming back, I do not at all fear it.

I am now just going to turn in for a night's rest, which the unwonted exercise of to-day has well prepared me for. I feel stronger and better and more elastic both in body and mind than I have for months, if not years, and indeed, I feel now that I did require a change and am most thankful for having it.

### *To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, January 8, 1852.

. . . I have seen dear John Shakespear<sup>2</sup> off by the steamer; it was a great pleasure to have had him with us and I feel very sorry to lose him. He is wise, I think, to retire, as he does, as the climate has I believe begun to tell on him: though he looks extremely well. You will see him doubtless ere long at Paris, as it is very likely he may go home that way. But his present plan is to pass a month in Egypt, going down the Nile by a steamer to the Cataracts. He is a dear good old fellow.

I had by the last mail a very kind, amusing letter from William Thackeray, telling me of the coming of his brother-in-law, Captain Shaw (whom I knew at home and liked), and his wife, a most good-natured little Irishwoman, as W. T. describes her. We shall be very glad to receive them during their stay here, and I shall like much to see him again. I am quite pleased with W. T.'s kind and affectionate letter. It seemed quite to revive old times. . . .

Our poor friend, Mr. Austin, from Moulmein, is with us, I fear utterly and irretrievably ruined. Mercantile affairs here are again, I am sorry to say, looking very gloomy. The members of our Bar are augmenting while the depression in trade prevents any increase of business. What reason for thankfulness I have in everything attending my Indian career! Had I come out a few years later, as I felt personally so much disposed to do, I should have had a hard struggle against difficulties instead of the prosperous career I have hitherto had. I dare scarcely think whether

it will continue or not. A continuance of such uninterrupted prosperity is not to be looked for and is certainly not good for me. I am often shocked at the impatience with which I fret at some little trifling disappointment or annoyance, and at the little gratitude I practically evince to the All Gracious Providence to whom I owe all my blessings. . . .

*To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, March, 1852.

Your dear letters of the 24th Dec. filled me with joy by the good accounts they contained not only of yourselves but of the wonderfully settled and comfortable aspect of affairs around you. Our good Chattie's remarks on the coup d'état and the way the French have taken it are admirable and witty, and I can assure you I have gained quite a succès at more than one dinner-table by débité-ing them, as the last communications from my brilliant political correspondent in Paris! I suppose that if I were a Frenchman I should shout, "Louis Napoléon—No"—and I can fancy the good people's exclamation of "Il a bien fait." But the worst of this proceeding is that it affords to the Reds the only justification they have ever had for their violence, and would leave a vast deal more to be said in their favour if they were to be successful to-morrow (which don't think I anticipate) than if they had been so the day before the Coup. After all, Charlotte's comparison of the people to the heated wife in Molière is the true one, and "Si je veux qu'il me batte?" is the best answer to give to distant speculators like myself, as well as to nearer and less manageable ones like the *Times*. I am much relieved to hear it was not my old acquaintance, the younger Hoffe, who was killed—but I remember the elder one too, and feel very sorry for him. I hope he hasn't left a family, poor fellow. Imprudent though it was in those poor fellows to be in the streets at all, there seems to have been no reason for them to expect being shot down, without more provocation than a single shot from one window or so—on the Boulevards more than in the quiet Champs Élysées—and the Parisians certainly shew themselves of

an all-forgiving character when they kiss the hand from which such savage orders must have, at least indirectly, emanated. One sage reflection that arises out of the renewed and ever recommencing miseries which the old French Revolution led to, is to glorify the Anglo-Saxon race, and its younger brother, Jonathan. How wonderful is the success of the American republic and their self-government when contrasted with every effort of the poor French to govern themselves! It was almost incredible that the Americans should have been a happy and prosperous nation without a check for 70 or 80 years under a Republican constitution, won for themselves with arms in their hands, while all the heroism, eloquence, patriotism of the French has resulted in the admission, after 60 years of struggle and often of agony, that they are children, utterly incapable of the smallest modicum of political rights! It's not merely the difference between a Washington and a Napoleon, but that between a nation of men—disagreeable, tyrannical, and grasping very often, but still men—and one of amiable but passionate and misguided children. I sincerely trust, however, that Louis Napoléon will be completely successful in the work he has begun, for doubtless his success alone can now save France from dreadful misery. But though it is for her welfare it certainly is not for his honour, and were I a Frenchman ever having the national honour on my lips and thinking I had it in my heart, I think I should be at a loss which to prefer. . . .

### *To his Wife*

HOTEL POINT DE GALLE,  
Friday evening, May 7, 1852.

. . . The only thing to complete my enjoyment of them, and of the anticipation of those before me, would be to have you and my little darlings with me. The voyage has been in every respect most propitious, and the "Erin" has quite done justice both in point of speed and comfort to the expectations we formed of her. We got off very soon after I embarked, but unfortunately the delay of the two hours in the morning prevented our getting out to sea that night, which half an hour more daylight would have

enabled us to do. That night we lay at anchor a little below Kidgeree, and very wretched work it was, for we pitched and rolled about, the night being blustery, and the demon of sickness took possession of me as soon as we were at anchor. The next day, Sunday, was a wretched one, for I was completely floored, and the contrast to the happy Sundays we are used to pass together struck me keenly. On the Sunday night I went to bed fully expecting the odious malady to continue the next day and till the end of the voyage; and I did wake up wretched enough, but, to my surprise and delight, after a bathe in a most glorious plunging bath large enough almost for me to swim in, the Demon appeared to be exorcised, and though I fully expected his return to claim his votary, he never came back throughout the whole of the voyage. A calm day opportunely intervened on Monday, and from that time we had on the whole beautiful weather, and though we had a head wind nearly the whole way and at times a pretty strong one, we anchored here within five days from our leaving the Sandheads, and it was altogether a beautiful voyage. The bath every day was most delicious, and the dinner I made on the last three days was something like those on which William Thackeray compliments me, of days of yore, especially in the article of pasties, which I found most excellent and comforting after the internal discipline I had undergone. Everyone was most attentive, from the Captain down to a very nice lad, a Steward, without whose aid I should never have got to my garments on the first dire day. The Captain was most charming to the end of the chapter, and the Chief officer, with whose good looks I was so much taken from the first, did every justice to his honest, good-humoured face, and I really felt quite sorry to part with their nice, clean, swift steamer. I shall certainly never travel in such style in a steamer again, having it all to myself, with the exception of the Parsee passengers, who were very respectable, good sort of *compagnons de voyage*. We had a very dark, squally night last night, which was provoking, as we were in great need of light to see the land and were obliged to keep far out, but we got in most beautifully to-day before midday, and here I am at half-past nine at night, after two long walks about Point de Galle, and a most excellent dinner, which certainly would be equivalent to at least two in Calcutta,



at a really very comfortable hotel here, taking mine ease in mine inn—which ease, however, is to be interrupted rather earlier than I could quite wish, as I start to-morrow at 5 a.m. per Royal Mail for Colombo. I cannot describe to you how I have enjoyed the pure fresh sea air, of which I have inhaled a stock that ought to last for years, and which is still blowing on me in Galle. I am most agreeably surprised at finding this such a pretty place, i.e. the ramparts and walks about, for the town itself is miserable. But on going round the ramparts you have a succession of most beautiful sea views, since three fourths are surrounded by the bay and sea which breaks on a beautiful rocky coast, while the fourth side presents a very happy smiling country view. The sea breeze when you are in it is delicious; when out of it the place is stuffy enough, but the sun is literally without power compared with that of Bengal. . . .

*To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, June 3, 1852.

. . . I wrote to you from Galle after my pleasant six days' sail there, and the next morning at 5 a.m. was in the stage-coach (a kind of open britzka painted red and of iron) on the road to Colombo. On inquiring the previous evening whether I had any fellow-passengers, I was informed that there was one Don José da Silva, whom I took for a descendant of some of the old Portuguese nobles of the island, and was curious to see what he was like. The Don took his seat in the dark—and what was my surprise to see, when day broke in upon us, a miserable half-caste, probably a servant in some English family, whose principal garment left it doubtful whether he was in scanty petticoats or in a wide pair of trowsers, the former of which, however, proved to be the case. The road is very pretty for the first 40 miles, running along by the seashore, and giving you beautiful glimpses of old ocean gambolling and playing almost at the very feet of the cocoanut trees. At Colombo I was most kindly welcomed by Mr. McCarthy, the present Secretary, a friend of Sir J. Colville's, who has a nice, intelligent wife. I went then to see the Bishop—Chapman—who was an old master at Eton in my time,

and under whom I long was. He was very glad to see me and was very kind, as was his wife. He was the master of pompous ways, of whom the boys used to tell the story of his question to the waiter, "Do we dine collectively or individually?" To whom the puzzled waiter answered, "No. 4, No. 4, Sir." His pomposity had not increased with his high station, and the Bishop was much less grandiloquent and lofty than the master.

I passed Sunday at Colombo and had a pleasant bathe in the sea there. The sea beach is fine, but in other respects I did not much like Colombo. I tried to find out the Langslows' house there, but no one whom I fell in with could tell me of its whereabouts. He himself, however, was remembered, I found, wherever I went, and all whom I saw spoke with the highest respect and regard for his character, and regret for his loss.

On the Monday I went on by another stage-coach to Kandy, 72 miles further on, and up some very high, fine hills. One pass, the Callicannon Pass, shortly before reaching Kandy, is magnificent. Kandy is a woody spot in a valley about 2,200 feet high, with beautiful hills on all sides, and an artificial lake made by some of the old Cingalese Kings of Kandy, which supplies the great want of the scenery in Ceylon—water—and has a beautiful effect.

Mr. McCarthy had given me a letter to the Governor, Sir George Andrews, who at present lives there at a beautiful place called the Pavilion, and who received me very civilly. At dinner it turned out that my uncle St. John<sup>1</sup> was his oldest friend, and had on some occasion pulled him out of the water when drowning, so he was most gracious and kind. He had been himself a Bombay civilian, and was at Hertford I think with poor St. John. He recognised a family likeness in me and exclaimed, "The same length of limb—the same prominent nose." Though an old gentleman near 70, he had a young and pretty wife and has a fine baby (the 22nd I believe in number) born the other day.

At Kandy I went up a beautiful hill, the highest in the neighbourhood, called Machian Pallias, which the matter-of-fact touch of the English corrupt into Mutton Billtass.

<sup>1</sup> St. John Thackeray, of the Madras Civil Service, had been killed in 1824 at the fort of Kittoor, when going forward with a white flag to parley, aged thirty-three.

The top is about 6 miles off Kandy, and as it was raining hard for the greater part of my ascent, and the ground was heavy, I was pretty tired when I got there, but was most amply rewarded by an enchanting view. The town of Kandy itself, with its Christian church and the lake, looked quite a bijou in the valley below, and I was most fortunate in the day's clearing up before I got to the top and the sun coming out gloriously. I thought of my dear Father's pilgrimage up Otter's [?] Peak and repeated your verses, my beloved mother. I saw here too the most lovely rainbow that ever gladdened my eyes, a perfect semi-circle stretching from one valley below one's feet to another, the whole of it being seen in relief against the green forest or plantations of the hillside, giving a more lovely and brighter green to the landscape one saw through it. I cannot describe the lovely effect it had or the sensations it caused me—so bright and perfect and heavenly. After I had long feasted my eyes, I began to descend by the opposite side of the hill from that by which I had come up, very ready for breakfast, when suddenly, to my dismay, the path stopped. I thought it must be some mistake and strove to find the continuation, but in vain. I was obliged to retrace my steps. After some time I reached another path that branched off from the first, but that also stopped abruptly. Another and another did I try in the same way, and was at last obliged reluctantly to admit to myself that my only chance of getting back was to retrace my steps to the top of the hill, whence I could have a view of my course. But I was by this time so tired, and the weight of my wet clothes was so great, that it seemed impossible that I could ever drag myself again to the top. I shouted and holloed in hope of attracting the attention of someone who could guide me, but in vain. No human being seemed to be within miles of me, and the dense coffee which grew there about seven feet high prevented both my sight and the sound of my voice penetrating. However, I continued the ascent—feeling at times dreadfully frightened lest I should have again taken one of those endless paths which, after leading some way up, would then descend and suddenly stop. On one occasion, on coming to a point where two met, the one of which I knew must be of that character and the other must be the true path to the top of the hill, I felt that, if I took



the wrong one, I should scarce have strength or spirits to retrace my steps, and I prayed to God that I might choose the right path. He heard me, and to my delight I found myself by degrees getting nearer and nearer to the top of the mountain. At last, to my intense joy, I reached it, and never shall I forget my ecstasy when I saw, about 2 miles off, the house of an English gentleman, a coffee planter, high up the hill which I had climbed on my ascent. Utterly exhausted as I had felt before, my strength and spirits revived at once when I found I was in the right direction and near the habitations of men, and I got over the two miles in a wonderfully short space of time. At his house I was most hospitably and kindly received, was supplied with hot water and a change of good woollen clothes, which, as my host to other admirable qualities added a good portly frame, he was able to supply me completely with. He turned out to be a Captain Jolly, a retired Captain of an Indiaman who lives with a nice pleasant wife in that lovely spot, excluded from the haunts of men, though himself one of the most hospitable of them. Then they gave me one of the best breakfasts I ever ate, kept me till tiffin at 3, when I again joined the hospitable board, and finally dismissed me in my own garments down the hill at 4 in the afternoon—none the worse, thanks to them, for my adventure. Had I not found such hospitality from them, but had had to drag on in my exhausted state to Kandy, I think most likely I should have been attacked by fever—but as it was, I did not feel the slightest ill effects from my adventure. I don't know when anything has produced so pleasing an effect on me as the genuine kindness and hospitality of this excellent couple.

The next day I started off en route for Neuralia. I breakfasted about 12 miles from Kandy with the Magistrate who had come in the mail coach with me from Colombo and who had promised to make arrangements for my getting on to Neuralia. He was quite dark, a descendant of the old Kandian [?] chiefs, but English is his language and all his ways, and was (as were all classes through the island) most hospitable. He supplied me with a small carriage and a pair of steeds driven tandem fashion, which belonged to an old man who took me all the way up the hills gallantly. From this point the ascent was continuous, though that day very gradual. That night I went as far



as Rambudde, a beautiful spot, embedded in hills and with waterfalls on every side. The weather looked very threatening for the next day, but I enjoyed an excellent night in the nice clean rest-house there. The next morning early we started, and had a magnificent view for 3 or 4 miles before we began the ascent of the pass; but alas! we then got into the region of continual rain, and for the next 9 or 10 miles, which took us to the top of the pass, one could not get a glimpse of the magnificent scenery which was there. Steep and rugged was the ascent, and, spite of rain, I walked up nearly the whole way, that being preferable to the jolting of the carriage. The ascent accomplished, we proceeded on a plain through fruit trees for about 4 miles, when we reached our destination, the hill station of Neuralia. The effect is very disappointing at first, for the aspect is bleak and dreary, the trees have lost their beauty though not their size, the hills are abrupt without being very picturesque, and there is a total absence of water. Here I found established in a most comfortable little English-looking cottage my kind friends the Mortons, who were very glad to see me. Unfortunately, they had no room to give me a bed, which would have been a trifle, but Lady Dalhousie<sup>1</sup> had taken the whole of the only decent inn in the place, and the other rest-house on it is a most filthy and miserable place, so wretchedly provided with necessaries that the addition of a large appetite was felt as a kind of calamity. However, there I had to stay for the 4 or 5 days that I stopped at Neuralia, but the Mortons were most hospitable and I was continually over with them. The climate is a fine, bracing, cold climate, as cold as England, and one was quite glad of woollen clothes, blankets at night, and fire all day. I felt all my old English energies revive, and used to take prodigious walks and occasionally very pleasant rides with the Mortons. I stayed there till Monday, the 17th, when I returned. I spent three days most pleasantly at Kandy, receiving great hospitality from the Governor and making pleasant excursions to coffee gardens. Then back to Colombo and Galle, embarked, and on Saturday night (the 29th) at 9 o'clock, after a most pleasant voyage, I had the happiness of embracing my darling wife and little ones, and I am in every respect better and stronger for

<sup>1</sup> She was on her way home, very ill, and died on the way.

the journey. But I must close, or I shall be too late. Heaven bless and preserve you, my beloved ones, prays

Your ever affectionate, devoted

W. RITCHIE.

The first of the family partings was now to take place, and Gussie and Blanche were to be sent home under the care of Mrs. Low. Gussie used to tell us of her distinct recollection of her father standing over her in her berth with tears in his eyes taking a long farewell.

*W. Ritchie, Esq., from C. S. Bayley*

MAURITIUS, June 8, 1853.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,

Your letter has scarcely arrived by the "Queen of the South" when the "Indiana" comes in to snap at my reply.

My first impression on reading the commencement of your letter was one of bitter self-reproach and mortification. And this was heightened (or, deepened) by the magnificent obscurity in which you contrived to shroud your thoughts by the aid of that invaluable ally, *cacography*. I felt assured that I had stolen, purloined, embezzled, perverted, or converted something, but what it was I could not make out.

After reading (as well as the said kakography would permit and after digesting it as well as my feeble Liver will allow) I arrive slowly at the conclusion that a copy of Archbold's Bankruptcy will satisfy your cravings and appease your indignation.

But at the moment—or, as our Anglicizing Creoles say, "presently"—I am using the said Archbold for the purpose of cramming divers things anent Bankruptcy previous to the passing of a Bankruptcy Law through Council. When this is done, and done with, I will despatch my copy to suit the uses of an old friend and better man at Calcutta.

Why did you not come hither, oh Ritchie? Though our way of life be rude, and our hospitality rugged—yet

we would receive you cordially and gratefully. Come, if you can. I would take care of your children as well as I could, but that is not much to say for a man who has never known how to take care of himself.

I fear I shall not go to Calcutta. The fact is, I find it difficult to save out of my salary, and—even with the prospect of meeting an old, valued friend—I shrink from the contingency of contracting debts. I have been here 3 years and have put by—£200! True that I have expended thrice that amount on English debts (confound them!). This makes one trepid of further expenditure. Yet I should wish to see you, old fellow.

I am much interested in your account of Sir G. Anderson. There was, indeed, much to be liked in the old man's character: bear as he sometimes affected to be. I like him and regret him much.

I have just heard from Morris—a wild, reckless, care-defying letter. What a lucky man! and to think that, with a little care, and without the foolish piques, impatience and hopes and aspirations and grumblings of mine, I might at this moment have been in his place—in London—jolly, powerful, and self-complacent! Yet, let me be thankful for having had power to serve a friend whom I esteemed. All's for the best: perhaps.

By the bye, tell me this. Is there any opening in the management of an Indian paper? I mean, without the *drudgery of editing*. But I fancy I could not write up to the taste of your Qui Hi's. There will be many stirring themes in India ere long.

So, you are prospering and getting rich! It is well; yours is the prosperity which excites no envy and demands no Nemesis. So very many good fellows fail in this struggle of life, that all men rejoice when so good a fellow as you succeeds. I only wish I could congratulate you in person. As I write Eton and Cambridge are swelling in my heart.

Good-bye, old fellow. God bless you. Come here if you can, if not send some of your kith and kin here as your proxies. I will send Archbold's Bankruptcy as my representative. I salute your wife and remain, dear old Ritchie,

Yours ever,

C. S. BAYLEY.

*To his Mother and Sisters*

June 16, 1853.

MY BELOVED MOTHER AND SISTERS,

. . . We were much grieved to hear of the death of poor Lady Dalhousie so near England. He will have felt it dreadfully: for he is a proud, unbending man, devoted to her, and has no one here with whom he could share his grief. There is something most melancholy in the long expectation of months, where the beloved one has gone home by sea, without a possibility of hearing till the end of the voyage, and the mind has through the whole time clung to the hope of hearing a word of comfort at the end of three months; but, instead of the sorrow being turned into joy, it is made tenfold more dark and bitter. And, sad privilege of greatness, he received the news, poor man, by electric telegraph the night before any letter was in, and before any one else had heard it to break the shock for him. I feel for him most deeply. . . .

I have been for some time past endeavouring to assist a wretched woman who has been left here in a state of misery and destitution which she has brought upon her own head, but which is so great that it is impossible to help pitying her. It is indeed a tale of shame and sorrow, but it may interest you to hear it. About 2 years and a half ago there arrived here a Mr. and Miss C——, brother and sister, with three children of the former, who stated that he was a widower and had lost his wife shortly before coming out. I think I must have mentioned them to you, as I felt great pity for a poor little deformed child who had fallen downstairs just after her mother's death. He came to the Bar here, and, spite of an Irish brogue and some vulgarity of manner, was a man of considerable eloquence and attainments, and was getting on very thrivingly in Court. Suddenly there came out a report from Ireland that his wife was not dead, but living in Ireland; that the supposed sister was not his sister but his cousin, who had been seduced by him at a very early age, and was the mother of the two younger children, and that he was as discreditable a fellow as ever lived. He denied all this in the most solemn manner, and undertook to prove that the whole thing was a mistake—that his wife was dead—and the lady living with him was his sister.



I confess that, though I did not like the manner of his denial, which was full of Irish braggadocio, I firmly believed its truth, and we and others who did so did what we could to countenance poor Miss C——, whom we thought the subject of a malignant slander. But when the reference had been made to Ireland, it turned out that the rumour was too true in all its worst particulars, and, spite of his solemn asseverations of innocence, which were forced by him upon us in a manner that became quite revolting, we had no alternative but to expel him from our Bar Library and meetings, although he was still allowed to practise in Court. The poor wretch's business dwindled away and he became desperate in circumstances, and last month the poor creature was attacked with cholera and died in a few hours. The poor woman was left utterly destitute with 3 children, the eldest of whom is the wife's, who is still alive in Ireland. The property had been seized and taken out of her house shortly after her partner in guilt had breathed his last. We got up a subscription that would suffice to send her with her chicks home to Ireland, but the poor creature turned out to be expecting another child, so that it was impossible to send her away at once. In the difficulty we communicated with the Roman Catholic Archbishop here, Dr. Carew, the family being Roman Catholics, and he has promised an asylum for the wretched family for a time in the Orphanage attached to one of the convents here. I went over the place with the good Archbishop, who really was most zealous and charitable in his assistance, and was astonished at the admirable arrangements made at very little cost to the convent and Institution attached to it. But above all I was charmed by a good nun, Sister Philomena, the Lady Superioress of the Loretto Convent, a fine young woman of 35, who was so ladylike, sensible, and full of kindness and charity that I was quite fascinated by her. Her name is Dora Frizelle (not so pretty as Philomena), and she knew this unfortunate Miss C——'s mother and family, which she says are very much respected in her part of Ireland, and well remembers the misery caused them by her disappearance when first this ill-omened connexion took place. The Archbishop will write to the family and try to induce them to receive her back, though I fear that it will be difficult to welcome her with 3 children at her back ! Failing that,

the Archbishop thinks an opening may be found for her in Australia; he being on intimate terms with Captain and Mrs. Fletcher, who have done much for the cause of emigration. I was much struck by the infinitely superior organization of the Roman Catholics for purposes of charity, and the energy with which they take up the case of an unfortunate person of their own faith. She is a poor creature out of the way of harm in the Orphanage, and though I do not think there is the same amount of penitence in her which these good people looked to find, if anything can give her a chance of mending her ways, this will. I am ashamed to have taken up so much time and space with this wretched account.

I have lately been reading "Mary Barton" and am charmed with it.

Farewell now, my beloved ones; kiss our darlings a hundred times for us.

My best love to William Thackeray, if you see him. How glad I am he's returned safe and sound, dear old fellow. I do hope he will keep the money he has saved.

*To his Mother and Sisters*

CALCUTTA, August 7, 1853.

. . . Our friends the Colvilles have gone this morning to Madras on their way to the Nilgherries. We shall miss them much, but they have left with us a charming library of books with which I look forward to "délasser" myself greatly in the coming Doorgah Poojah, to which we begin to look forward with delight, although they are 7 weeks off. But they will be close at hand when this reaches you, and you must therefore figure us to yourselves as then about entering upon the pleasantest part of the year. . . .

*To his Mother and Sisters*

BARRACKPORE, October 18, 1853.

. . . I have been indulging my old classical tastes during the holidays and reading two of the vols. of Grote's History of Greece, an admirable work. What a pleasing contrast to another book that I have also read, "Napoleon at St. Helena," written by an old legal friend of mine, Forsyth,

who thinks he is acting the judge and historian while he is only playing the Advocate—on behalf too of Sir Hudson Lowe, of all people in the world, whom he has taken as his hero and client. The attempt at rehabilitation is a very painful one, for, although he unquestionably shows that Napoleon throughout his captivity acted more like a small child than a great man, he utterly fails to rescue the British Government from the shame of having acted a narrow-minded and unworthy part towards poor old Boney. The picture of the last 5 years of that wonderful genius is one of the most painful that can possibly be read, and the worthy author writes complacently on, apparently quite unconscious of it. . . .

CALCUTTA, *December 19, 1853.*

. . . I was nearly getting into a scrape by expressing this sentiment the other day to a Russian gentleman, a M. Baritiffsky, whose father lives in Paris, and who is travelling here, where I saw him on the point of starting for the Upper Provinces of India. Just before he went, I met him almost in the dark, and he told me that he was going and that he found there would be war between his country and England, but hoped he, as a peaceable traveller in the British territories, would not be molested. I, of course, said he was perfectly safe, and was on the point of adding that the act of Napoleon in detaining our travellers was considered so infamous in England that we should be the last people to imitate such an example, when I became aware of the presence in the Russian's carriage of a gentleman whose black beard formed a contrast to the blonde one of the Muscovite, and who I thought must come from a more Southern clime.

I therefore stopped, and as we were talking in French it was fortunate I did so, for the unknown turned out to be a French gentleman, who would not have relished the remark. How fortunate it is that England and France are acting with such good sense and unity! And what a blessing that so much good and kindly feeling prevails between the countries! Everything that the Emperor has done regarding the English alliance and the dispute with Russia has redounded to his credit and tends to strengthen his position in Europe. . . .

## CHAPTER VII

### MUTINY LETTERS TO HIS CHILDREN

1854-59

WILLIAM RITCHIE and his wife returned to India, taking with them his sister Jane. But India did not suit her asthma, and she had to return early in 1856. On his return to Calcutta, William found himself appointed Advocate-General of Bengal.

The four eldest children were now at home, and to them William was a regular correspondent.

Of the Mutiny letters I can only find, most unfortunately, those addressed to his children. His speech in 1858 shows how profoundly he was affected by the event.

### LETTERS, 1854-59

#### *To his Sisters*

CALCUTTA, *January 20, 1854.*

. . . William Thackeray's kindness affected me deeply. May God bless and reward him for it. I had been charmed at hearing by former mails of his goodness to our children and of the fondness they had shown for him—but his sympathy for my beloved mother under this affliction is more precious in my eyes than all his former kindness, great as it was.

We have just been sending home a poor forlorn little boy, the only legitimate child of that wretched man C——, whose miserable history I told you of, and who is going to his mother and godfather in Yorkshire. It was a pitiable thing to see the poor little fellow's distress at leaving his mamma, as he considered the wretched woman here to be, and brothers. He is deformed and



looks younger than he really is, and is very intelligent and sensitive, poor fellow. I fear he never will be so happy in his life again as he has been in the Convent, where the good nuns have watched over him with the greatest care and kindness.

*To his Sisters*

CALCUTTA, April 18, 1854.

. . . I think you will be amused at the following verses, which will shew you that my old habit of punning on names, which I had thought myself extinct, is still capable of being revived, and that it exists in still higher quarters than at the bar. A poor boatswain of the name of Lawson, a very fine, simple-hearted specimen of an English sailor, who had just received upwards of R. 1,000 (£100) Prize Money for the survivors in the Burmese War, on landing in Calcutta took up his abode at a kind of Sailors' Hotel or Punch House, by far the most respectable of the kind in Calcutta, kept by two men named Craven and Myers, who had succeeded his former host, Champion. He entrusted his money to them—lived as sailors too often do live on shore, poor fellow, for 10 days, and at the end of that time, on asking for his money, received, out of his R. 1,000, R. 50 or so only, with a bill showing that the rest had been expended on drink for himself and his friends, whom he entertained most liberally. Thinking this a little trop fort, he then brought his action for the recovery. I was counsel against him, though all my sympathies were with the poor fellow. We clearly proved for the innkeepers that they had faithfully accounted for all the money entrusted to them except about R. 150, which they set to the account of two large parties given by him to another ship's crew, but at which he was himself too tipsy to give orders. We accordingly got a verdict for the amount with costs. When the case was over Sir J. Colville sent me the following lines, prefacing them with the Latin saying, "He falls into Scylla who avoids Charybdis." I must tell you that the name of the poor boatswain's attorney was Orr, a man who doesn't stand very high and has the name of running up a long bill :

"Tom Lawson, the boatswain, in search of a haven,  
Fell into the clutches of Myers and Craven :  
And he certainly ran very near on lea shore  
When he made in distress for the office of Orr."

To which I replied :

“ Poor Lawson complains that his snug little haven  
Is changed from good Champion to merciless Craven.  
Ah ! still greater the change he will have to deplore,  
When he finds all his Silver’s turned over to Orr.  
But though his sad fate my compassion inspires,  
I must never forget I’m the counsel of Myers.”

“ *Meeting in aid of the Patriotic Fund, Dec. 18, 1854, for the Relief of the Families of those who have fallen in the Crimea.*

“ The Meeting at the Town Hall, convened by the Sheriff for the purpose of raising subscriptions in aid of the Patriotic Fund, was attended on Friday evening by about a hundred gentlemen, representing severally nearly all classes of the community. Among others were Sir J. W. Colville, Sir Arthur Fuller, Sir Robert Barlow, Mr. Charles Allen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Peterson, Mr. David Cowie, Paboo Prosunno Coomar Tagore, Baboo Ramgopaul Ghose, &c., &c., Mr. D. Elliott, Mr. Malet, Mr. Ricketts, Mr. Cockburn, Mr. Valisben.

“ The Sheriff took the chair at four o’clock, and opened the meeting by reading the requisition convening it.

“ Mr. Ritchie then rose to move the first Resolution, which ran as follows :

“ ‘ . . . For never, on the one hand, had there been a war in which those actively engaged were exposed to greater sufferings or bore them more cheerfully ; nor, on the other hand, had there ever been a national war in which one portion of the community enjoyed such an exemption from its burdens as we the peaceful inhabitants of British India. [Hear, hear.] Hitherto, we had not shared in any of the horrors, miseries, or even inconveniences of war—we had only from a remote and secure distance shared its anxieties, and hoped, as Englishmen, ere long to share in the triumph and exultation of its success. [Hear, hear, hear.] For us, no doubled income-tax, no increased cost of living, no scarcity of the necessities or even luxuries of life, no interruption of our ordinary commerce or pursuits, had appealed to our interests or forced irresistibly upon us the conviction that war, with all its glory, was a hateful and a desolating thing. And when we looked to our countrymen at home who had borne all these increased burdens with cheerfulness, still coming forward—the noble and the

peer with their princely donations—the artizan, the mechanic, the day labourer, and the seaman with their more humble, but more affecting and equally acceptable contributions towards the cause we had at heart, we had before us a lesson which it would be worse than a folly, it would be a moral crime to neglect. [Hear, hear.] And if we turned from the efforts made at home, to the men for whose families those efforts were being made, all surprise at this liberality and this enthusiasm will cease ! Happily, we knew who those men were ; and all thanks and all honour to the Press of England that we knew them now so well. In former wars as glorious, though not more glorious, than this, England knew what her soldiers were in the battlefield from what they did there. She knew that manly thews and sinews, gallant hearts and undaunted courage were theirs. But she knew this chiefly from the victories they won and the glories they achieved. But the nation at large little knew the moral worth and virtue of the men who had poured out their blood for her like water. Now, however, thanks to the Press, we see them in colours as true and faithful as they were vivid and captivating ; and we saw, some of us to our surprise, that the daring soldier who, in the hour of danger, held his life as lightly and recklessly as if he stood alone in the world, had often the kindest and tenderest heart, the most earnest yearnings for the absent ones that were near and dear to him, and the strongest sense of his duties as the head and support of a family. [Hear, hear.] The letters which had been published from non-commissioned officers and privates writing from the seat of war—letters meant only for the eyes of those dear to the writers—were instinct with the most devoted and disinterested affection, the truest morality, and the purest spirit of Christianity and Religion. [Loud cries of Hear, hear.] Many a letter from a poor private or corporal to his motherless daughter or children, whom the next day might make also fatherless, might afford a lesson in ethics to the philosopher, and in faith, hope, and love to the Divine. [Renewed cries of Hear, hear.] It had been said by the enemy—by the captured enemy, as an excuse for that capture—that our soldiers had fought, not like men, but like devils. They who had said this little knew, however, that those men who had fought like devils had, the morning before the battle,

prayed like Christians for the absent ones that were dear to them—[hear, hear]—that those same manly lips which, in the deadliest hour of the fight, raised that thrilling cheer never heard from British soldiers except as the herald of death and the harbinger of victory, often moved, when the fight was over, in fervent thanksgiving to the Almighty Author of all good who had for another day preserved a wife from being a widow, and her children from being fatherless. [Hear, hear, hear.] It used to be thought, even by those who best knew the human heart and the British character, that that beautiful union of daring and gentleness was to be found in only a favoured and gifted few—scions of noble race who had what was emphatically called “gentle” blood in their veins. But the soldiers of the Crimea had afforded a refutation of that fallacy. Many a humble private, boasting no aristocratic name or pride of lineage, had realised the proud description given by our great poet of one of our greatest warriors :

“ “ In War, was never Lion raged more fierce,  
In Peace, was never gentle Lamb more mild,  
Than was that young and princely gentleman.”

Many a hardy frame which now lay cold and stark on yon inhospitable shore—which bore, while living, without a murmur the toil and labour of the private soldier ; and which, alas ! might have writhed for hours—perhaps for days—in the agony of neglected wounds, had been warmed in life by as gentle and as heroic a spirit as animated our Black Prince at Cressy, or our Sidney at Zutphen. And would it not be grievous if the last agonising thought of one such noble spirit, ere it winged its way to the presence of its Maker, was such a thought as this—“What will become of those dear to me ? Who will provide for my destitute wife and little ones ? ” Might we not, on the contrary, trust that the last thought which shed peace, and hope, and consolation on the mind of the dying hero was—“My country, which has cost me and mine so dear—my country and my countrymen will provide for those dear to me” ? [Hear, hear.] Surely, surely, that country would never be unmindful of so precious a trust—those countrymen, however scattered, and wherever Providence might have cast their lot, would not disappoint that dying hope, would not frustrate that sacred legacy. [Loud cries of Hear, hear, hear.] What Englishman was there who



heard him, who could bear to have to say in future years, when speaking of this year, which is now rolling rapidly but not ingloriously for England to its close, these words of reproach: "That was the year in which another crown of imperishable laurel was added to the majestic brow of England, by those soldiers who proved themselves worthy sons of their fathers in the Peninsula, and by their Chief, who proved himself a worthy disciple of the great Duke. That was the year in which the alliance with that great nation (pointing to the French Consul, M. Vabryen) whom folly, prejudice, and ignorance were wont to call our natural enemy, but whom more enlightened times and views had shown to be our natural friend—[loud and repeated cries of Hear, hear]—was cemented by the blood of some of the bravest sons of both nations. That was the year in which, by the glorious exploits of both Alma, Balaclava, and Sevastopol—names unknown to previous British story—become familiar as household words not only in the palace and the castle, but in many a humble cottage, in many a crowded street. That was the year in which hundreds and thousands of widows and orphans left to their country's care attested how deadly was the strife, and how dear-bought the victory. But that was the year in which I, who lived at home at ease—I, who enjoyed all the blessings of peace, and was enabled to increase my store and my provision for those dependent on me—I, who was preserved from all the horrors and privations of war, refused to stretch forth a hand to help or succour where help and succour were so loudly called for." Was there in Calcutta—which, whatever its failings, had never turned a deaf or selfish ear to any reasonable claim upon its benevolence—was there in India itself a man with heart so cold and sordid as to incur such a reproach, or who would refuse to succour these brave men and their families who were dearer to them than life, and less dear only than honour, duty, and their country? [Hear, hear, hear.] If that country could forget them she would forget herself, and be untrue, which she never can be, to her old traditionary character and greatness. And if any Englishman can forget or be ungrateful to these brave men, he would forfeit all just claim to that honour which they had rendered more than ever a proud one—the honour of being a worthy citizen of that country which they had more than ever

ennobled by their blood, and made more than ever glorious by their constancy and valour. [Loud cries of Hear, hear, hear.].’ ”

*Advocate-Generalship*

*To Charlotte*

*Dec. 22, 1855.*

Did I tell you in my last of the deep gratification I had received from the kind reception I met with from my brethren of the Bar and from the generous resolution they had come to (at the instance of Clarke, a man more than 20 years my senior, who had—if any man ever had—reason to suppose himself slighted and aggrieved by my being appointed over his head) to give me precedence as the leader of the Bar whether I brought with me a Patent of Precedence or not? There was some little hitch about the Patent—fortunately as it now has turned out—which prevented me from having it when I arrived, and Clarke communicated the resolution of the Bar to the Bench in a crowded Court, in the kindest and handsomest manner. I don't know whether I told you all this before—probably not—but it was quite an ovation for me, and touched me deeply. By this mail the letters patent from Her Majesty to her trusty, well-beloved William Ritchie, Esqre., Acting Advocate General, have arrived, and much as I value the honour derived from Her Majesty—who is the fountain of honour, says the Law—I feel the honour infinitely enhanced by this unexpectedly kind and spontaneous tribute from my professional brethren.

*To Charlotte and Jane*

*June 20, 1857.*

MY BELOVED SISTERS,

After despatching the few miserable lines that I wrote to you last night, I discovered that the steamer had been detained for 24 hours more, and that I might therefore add to them this further scrawl. We are expecting every minute to hear of the fall of Delhi, but the news has not yet arrived, and the disappointment is ex-

treme. Our last accounts of Sir H. Barnard were up to the 8th, on which day he had taken 26 of the rebels' guns, carried the heights above Delhi, and was expected to make the attack the next day. But the roads cannot yet be opened, & the dâk cannot be reorganized, as we have heard no later accounts than this of the 8th. I have no doubt that the news of the capture will have an electrical effect throughout India. It is a great misfortune that it has been so long delayed; but, as it is, it is providential that the spirit of revolt, though it has spread over the whole of Bengal and the N.W., has not extended to the other Presidencies, in which case even the fall of Delhi could not have put it down. Poor General Anson died with a fearful weight of responsibility on his head, as the many valuable lives lost since the beginning of this month might have been spared if he had advanced to Delhi at once, and had been able to take it without the dreadful delay which has led to the rising of so many of the natives who otherwise would have been afraid to stir. But a day or two must shew whether he may not fairly be relieved from a portion of this burthen, as, if it turns out contrary to general expectation that a siege train really was required, it will be a great relief to feel that the delay that has proved so fatal was unavoidable. Nearly all our intimate friends are, as we have every reason to hope, safe, but we are very anxious about some. Edward Thackeray, our dear Richmond (who has written a very spirited circular which every one praises for its contrast with some of our unfortunate Calcutta competitors), Dr. Charles, Sir Theo. Metcalfe, and the Scotts are all, we learn, quite safe, though all but Richmond have been in perilous positions. The Lows' dear boys are quite safe and well. We are anxious to hear of the two young Macnaghtens, one of whom was at Allahabad, where there has been a dreadful massacre, and one at Cawnpore, where they have been besieged, but held out gallantly. But, as their name is not in any list of killed or wounded, we have every hope. We are rather anxious, too, to hear of poor Tom's regiment, the 22nd, hitherto considered a crack corps, but now I fear not to be trusted more than the rest. The little band of English in the Upper Provinces have, on the whole, behaved nobly.

*To his Children*

MY DARLING CHILDREN,

I wrote you a very hurried chit yesterday which I'm afraid no one in the house (or out of it) will be able to read, but mamma was urging me to close, and as it was, I did close just in time. And she is now asking me to finish this at once too, just as I am beginning it, so that you will have two very slight notes by this mail.

You will be all very sorry to hear about the wicked Sepoys. Isn't it sad, Gussie, that the men at Meerut,<sup>1</sup> where Mrs. Scott, whom you used to call Tana 'Cott, was, on your birthday—10th May—when you were all enjoying yourselves in Paris—rose when the poor people meant to go to church in the evening; but don't you think it sad, Willie, that the brave Sepoys you used to be so fond of, who used to salaam to you on your pony at Barrackpore—should have turned into wicked men and killed so many of their officers, and still more, women and children? Do you remember coming with me to a large tent where all the Sepoys were wrestling and playing, and their being so good-humoured and our liking them so much, and afterwards our going to the Mess with the officers and having tiffin? That was with the 37th Regiment, who have now mutinied in Benares, but I am glad to say have been "well thrashed," as Gerald says, by the gallant English. And we have, since June, another and much better 37th Regiment, good Englishmen who have come up from Ceylon to protect us, and anyone of whom would fight ten men of the black 37th. Sixteen of them are on guard at the Bank next to our house, and we sent them some roast beef for dinner. The Sergeant wrote back a very polite note, saying that it was the first roast beef his men had eaten for eleven years, as they got none in Ceylon, where they had been. God bless you, my darlings, prays your very loving, 'fectionate Papa.

*To his daughter Augusta*

CALCUTTA, 1857.

I must write a separate note to tell you that one of your old friends is going to be married. Who? Guess.

<sup>1</sup> Meerut rising, Sunday, May 10, 1857.





WILLIAM RITCHIE, ELDEST SON OF WILLIAM RITCHIE.  
Member of the Board of Education.



AUGUSTA (GUSSY) RITCHIE, ELDEST DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM  
RITCHIE, AFTERWARDS MRS. DOUGLAS FRESHFIELD.



Do you give it up? Eleanor Grant<sup>1</sup> is the answer. To whom? Guess. Do you give it up? Don't turn over the page till you've thought. Sir James Colvile! You remember him well, I know, and Miss Colvile, who was so kind. Sir James gave you a pretty whip which I think you left behind, but I'm not quite sure. She is looking so handsome, and is, what is far better, so good and gentle and amiable. . . .

*To his Children*

CALCUTTA, July (?), 1857.

Papa writes this letter to you with his soldier's coat on his back and his sword by his side, and has just come off guard. But he has not any of the hardships of a soldier's life, for there is an excellent tiffin getting ready for him, and dear mamma to revive him as soon as his turn of duty is over. Little Gerald and Richmond are having dresses made just like the gallant Volunteers, about whom they talk all day: but the Chinaman made their little Napoleon boots, which are to come up to their knees, so tight in the instep that after pulling at them half the day they are obliged to give them up. They are both great darlings. Dear mamma is very busy looking after the poor people who come up from the country, having had all they possess plundered and destroyed by the wicked Sepoys, but being much happier than many other poor people who have been killed, like poor cousin Tom.<sup>2</sup> . . .

*From my Mother to her Children*

CALCUTTA, July (?), 1857.

Gerald and Richmond were so happy last night, for their volunteer coats came home, and you never saw anything so grand, just like real soldiers. They have jack-boots and breeches tucked into them. Dark blue coats all braided and turned up with red. Little pouches with a belt over their shoulders and sabretashes with C.V.G. for Calcutta Volunteer Guards on them in silver, and no

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Sir John Peter Grant, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (1859-62).

<sup>2</sup> Tom Ritchie.

end of silver buckles and mountings. I call Richmond General Tom Thumb. What shall Gerald be ?

*To his Children*

January 20, 1858.

. . . I know you will be very happy to hear that the poor children and ladies who were shut up so long in Lucknow, with thousands of wicked men thirsting for their blood, have arrived quite safely in Calcutta. But brave General . . . who was killed going into Lucknow to rescue them, was as kind as he was brave, and when about to start from Cawnpore for Lucknow, he carried with him as much arrowroot and children's food as he and a soldier, his servant, could carry, and filled up the little baggage he was allowed to take with good things for the poor little children who had been so starved and for whom he felt so much. And although he did not live to see them enjoy the treat he prepared for them, they did enjoy it without knowing what precious lives it had cost to get to their relief. It is said that for every woman and child who has been rescued from Lucknow three brave Englishmen have lost their lives ; but they died nobly, and our blessed Saviour who loves little children and gave His life for them, will pity and receive those who have given their lives for these helpless ones. . . .

*To his Children*

CALCUTTA, August 22, 1858.

Gerald has brought me his letter to enclose to you, and has reminded me that I have no time to lose if I mean to write to you too—which I am sure I ought to do. I see he has not told you about the Naval Brigade, who were received last week on their return from Lucknow with great honour. But the honours were not more than they deserved, for they have behaved nobly. It was quite pleasant to see two or three hundred regular English sailors, who had been fighting for a year on land as well as the best soldiers, looking so cheerful and happy and well after all they have gone through—defending us and other quiet



people who did not leave our homes—but who, but for such brave men as these, would have had to run away, or might have been killed if we had stayed. But there was one thing that made us all, both sailors and spectators, sad in all this rejoicing: that Captain Peel,<sup>1</sup> their commander, the best and bravest of them all, who was so good and kind that every man on board loved him as if he had been his brother, and who first proposed to take them up country when he brought his fine frigate, the Shannon, here just a year before, died of small-pox after all the fighting was over, and just as they were all so happy at his recovering from a bad wound he had received. We were all sad about him, for all felt that it would have been a great joy to have seen him back safe at the head of the gallant English sailors who were so proud of him and of whom he was so proud. We are going to give all the good sailors of the Shannon a dinner at the Town Hall, and I think it will be a gayer and better dinner party than any of us have ever been at at Calcutta or anywhere else. . . .

### *To his Children*

CALCUTTA, November 10, 1858.

How I wish you could have seen the illuminations with dear Gerald and Richmond. When we came back to our house after viewing them in the carriage, we found the house in a splendid blaze of light, without one of the letters having burnt out except the S in “Save,” as to which Gerald was very critical.

### *To his Sisters*

CALCUTTA, November 10, 1858.

Here we are again happily back at our own house in Calcutta, and all thoroughly well and in the enjoyment of a beautiful cold weather which set in most propitiously this year with the holidays. The event of the fortnight has been the inauguration of our new rule, which has taken place with the greatest possible éclat. The Queen’s pro-

<sup>1</sup> Captain Sir William Peel, R.N., was a son of Sir Robert Peel. His statue in Calcutta stands facing the river.

clamation is universally felt to be a noble production, but you will learn more fully what I and both English and natives think of it from the Report I send you of the speeches we made at a meeting held a day or two after the Proclamation. I hope you will like mine, as it contains my profession of faith regarding our rule in India, though I fear the view I took was in some respects rather Utopian. Every word I said of the Queen's proclamation was most fully deserved. You will also read with interest the speech of Ramgopaul Ghose,<sup>1</sup> an excellent native and one of the best specimens of his class, and of Mr. Wylie. The illuminations were also a great success. I shall always regret that Augusta did not come out to see them. The night was a beautiful one, and Calcutta never did look and never again will look so well as in the beautiful light of that night. It seemed, of all cities in the world, the best adapted for an illumination. The size and architecture of the buildings, with their numerous columns and great variety of style, with the wide spread of the Maidan, which enabled one to see the full extent of the illumination, surpassed anything that London, or even Paris, has displayed on any occasion on which I have seen the general rejoicings (spontaneous or *de commande*) take the form of illumination.

The whole of the Esplanade Row and Chowringhee Road, with Government House, the Town Hall, the Ochterlony Monument, and all the public buildings were a blaze of light, chiefly in oil, but some in gas, the oil looking, however, at a little distance as well as the gas, and bringing out into beautiful relief the outline of each building; the Auckland Gardens with the beautiful Burmese Pagoda, which I think was not complete but was commenced when you went away, dear Janie, were beautifully lit up with coloured lamps; the ships in the river, and particularly the men-of-war, burning beautiful lights, held up by hundreds of jolly tars at the yard-arm in their white dresses, made the scene an exquisite bit of fairyland. The dear little boys, who accompanied Colonel Scott, myself, the good Ricketts and young Macnaghten in our carriage, were, as you may imagine, enchanted, until little Richmond went

<sup>1</sup> Ramgopaul Ghose (1815-68) was an enlightened merchant of Calcutta, and as a promoter of education, a patriot, a politician, a speaker, and social reformer was one of the foremost men of his time.

fairly to sleep after several exclamations of "I tired," while Gerald said, with conscious superiority, "I shall never be tired of looking at these pretty things." Our own house was very prettily illuminated, with lights tracing out the outline of the building and columns, and a great God Save the Queen, with V.R. and a crown above all, which excited great delight in the children.

I must now break off or I shall be too late. The whole of this, after the first few lines, which were interrupted by dear, good General Outram coming in upon a matter of State importance, has been written in Court with the strident voice of Peterson sounding in my ear, and I have so often had to interrupt the thread of my letter to you, that I fear what I have written is hopelessly unconnected and unintelligible.

*From the Calcutta "Englishman" of November 5, 1858*

At a meeting held to address Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her assuming the Government of British India, Mr. Ritchie made the following speech :

"I am sure that I speak the feelings of all within, and of thousands and tens of thousands without, these walls when I say that we, inhabitants of this capital of British power in the East, whatever our race or origin or creed, hail with feelings of grateful loyalty and fervent hope the gracious and momentous words which forty-eight hours ago inaugurated a new Era in British India. Those words, pronounced in a spirit of wisdom, humanity and greatness worthy of the powerful monarch of a mighty Empire, worthy of the constitutional Sovereign of a free people, promised peace, progress and improvement to the land, welfare and prosperity to its people. Those words fell on the ears of men widely differing in their views both as to the traditions of the past and the prospects of the future. They fell on the ears of some who viewed with dread and apprehension the dissolution of that great and princely Company which had for a century swayed the destinies of the millions of this country with hand as firm, and sight as keen and comprehensive and large of range as

purpled Cæsar or Czar could boast. They fell upon the ears of others for whom the name of that Company had lost its ancient power, and who longed for the assumption by our Sovereign of those honours of Empire which they chafed to see her share with trustees and delegates. They fell upon the ears of others, again, who with the respect and admiration due to a name fraught with great associations, but without bigoted prejudice in favour of the perpetuity of its prestige, or undue apprehension as to the direct Government of the Crown, still looked forward to the new and untried rule with anxiety and fear mingled with their hopes. But upon the ears, and upon the minds and hearts of all alike, whatever their previous doubts or fears or anxieties, that Proclamation, justly and without flattery called Her Majesty's most gracious Proclamation, fell with soothing, cheering, animating influence, bearing with it the assurance of the healing of wounds, the forgetfulness of injuries, the closing of the frightful rents and chasms of discord for the past, and of peace, and hope, and progress and social order for the future. To this fair and fertile land, the garden and pride of Asia, the admiration and desire of Europe, with its teeming millions, its boundless resources, awaiting, almost courting, development at the hand of advancing civilization, but torn with internal discord, wounded almost to the death by the fell arm of Civil War, which paralyzes all progress, stimulates the rank growth of ignorance, darkness, and superstition; to this fair and fertile land the Royal Message came with healing on its wings, a glad harbinger of peace, and of harmony between opposite races of men and of good-will to all. So far as the words of a Prince can carry grace (as our old adage says a King's face ever should) the words of our Sovereign do so, and whether they be destined, as with God's help we trust they may be, to be accomplished, or to meet, which God in His mercy avert, with disappointment and defeat, none can doubt that that Sovereign has right nobly, and as well became that royal Lady, the beloved Queen of free and happy and glorious England, done her part. Let us endeavour to do ours. Depend upon it, all and each of us, European or native, servants of the Crown or independent of the Crown, can do something, nay, can do much; and if each of us in his degree only does his duty to his neighbour and his Sovereign, the high



aspirations of that Sovereign for the welfare of this country may be accomplished.

“ Let the Englishman throughout the land make it his pride to show (as I believe he has long felt, though our English nature is not demonstrative enough to proclaim it often openly in words) that he looks upon the native of this country as his brother, his fellow citizen, the subject of the same Sovereign, alike with himself entitled to her favour and protection, and bound to her in a common bond of loyalty : that he looks upon this country with gratitude, as every right-minded man must look on the land of his adoption, the land which has afforded him an opening for his industry, talents, and resources which England might have denied him, the land in which he has found a home, and has found or is seeking that comfort, competency and independence which England might not have afforded him : that he looks upon the British Rule in this country as a trust committed to our nation by the Most High for the good of this country itself and for the good of our own also, but only in accordance with that golden Rule (that holds as true between nations as between men) that we cannot do good to others without benefiting ourselves : that we would deem it a rank offence if we were to betray that trust, and that that trust would be betrayed if we were to look to India with an eye to self alone, and not to the good of its people : that he repudiates the false and calumnious imputation (which I rejoice to have this opportunity on behalf of my English fellow Citizens of disclaiming with all the energy I possess) that we adopt the wicked and foolish cry of India for English alone, that we entertain any feelings of rancour or enmity towards our native fellow subjects or that we shrink from acknowledging the sacred obligation we one and all owe to a land in which we have been, by the mysterious will and doubtless for the high and wise purposes of Providence, so wonderfully placed, so mightily protected, so mercifully preserved ! And let our native fellow subjects look upon us with full confidence that such are our feelings towards them that, although as an Englishman’s tongue be often rough, although he be less prompt to demonstrate his kindly feelings, more impatient in manner than accords with their standard of politeness (a standard to which, let us do them the justice of owning, they adhere more con-

sistently than we do to ours), yet beneath all this there lies a sterling vein of honest, hearty good-will to the natives of this country, which is not the less to be prized and relied on because it lies, as most valuable things do, below the surface and is not to be got at all at once ! Let these feelings, which I firmly believe, whatever may have been said to the contrary, have long really existed between all thinking Englishmen and loyal natives, prevail, and that distrust which is one of the most painful consequences in the train of civil war and anarchy will cease to exist, and that consummation may be near at hand for which Her Majesty so touchingly and with such deep sincerity prays. That prayer has already been referred to by one who has with true eloquence, the eloquence of right feeling and deep love of his country, addressed us in words which I trust will sink deep into the hearts of his countrymen, my friend Ramgopaul Ghose, who told us of the effect it produced on him. I will only add to the passage he uttered with such emotion the concluding words of that touching prayer. In that prayer let all true subjects of Her Majesty, whatever their race or creed, fervently join. In that prayer European and Native, Christian, Hindoo and Mahomedan, may find a common subject of petition to the Most High, and may we not hope without profaneness that a prayer thus offered in sincerity and truth, however various the creeds of those who breathe it, may be accepted at the throne of Him in whom we all alike live and move and have our being !

“ But it may be said, why meet to proclaim and certify your loyalty ? Who suspects the people of Calcutta, Europeans or Natives, of disloyalty ? Will Her Majesty care to know that you are, as you say, abundantly loyal, and that you much prefer her sway to that of the Nana Sahib ? The answer is easy. By the loyalty we desire to profess we mean no mere lip loyalty. Our loyalty does not merely mean our holding to our allegiance to the Queen, our abjuring that of traitors. Our loyalty means our resolve to comport ourselves in this country, and at this momentous crisis of its destinies, as men who have the good of this country and of England too at heart ; as men who, for the good of both countries, wish to do all that in us lies to further the gracious and wise intentions of Her Majesty as expressed in her message to the people

of this land ; as men who are willing to sacrifice and put aside our own private views or predilections or prejudices or crotchets for the common good of that land ; who are anxious to do everything within our power to secure a fair trial of and success to the new order of things established by our Sovereign and by Parliament ; who, in short, desire to meet our Sovereign's wishes in the same spirit in which those wishes were uttered by her. And as I believe our Queen deeply feels the solemn trust reposed to her, and in her heart of hearts longs to be under God the instrument of welfare to this country, so do I believe that no offering can be more acceptable to Her Majesty than the assurance, uttered as it will be by thousands of her subjects, European and native alike, and uttered by them from the heart, that her message is appreciated, that its lessons will not be thrown away, and that we are and all desire to give her proof of our loyalty by pledging ourselves to endeavour to the utmost to act, and to help those in authority under her in acting, in accordance with the great principles of her Gracious Proclamation.

“ If it be asked whether those among us who were servants of the late E. I. Company are consistent in thus addressing in terms of hope and rejoicing our new and Royal Mistress, I answer thus. I for one shall ever deem it an honour to have served the Honourable E. I. Company. I shall ever look on that Company with the respect and admiration which past greatness and wisdom, which magnificent achievements and an earnest desire to do good must inspire in all hearts save the basest. I shall never conceal that I should have been well contented to continue to serve that Company as long as I remained in India, and that I at first heard the news of its approaching fall with sorrow and distress, and with anxiety to know under what new and untried rule we were to live. But not the less on that account do I deem it (as I doubt not all servants of the Company will deem it) a sacred duty to accept cheerfully the change that is now irrevocably made : not the less, but perhaps the rather on that account, do I feel it not only a duty but a joy to hail in the first words the Queen has uttered to her Indian subjects, words of wisdom, mercy and power which would do honour to any form of Government, and which augur well both for the people to whom and for the Government by whom they were spoken.



Of Her Gracious Majesty to whom we owe these words we may say, as was said of old of her whose price was far beyond rubies :

“ ‘ Might and honour are her clothing : and she shall rejoice in the time to come.

“ ‘ She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue IS THE LAW OF KINDNESS.’

“ One word more, though it be to utter what may appear no better than a vain conceit. The other evening, while gazing on this city, bathed in that beautiful flood of light which gave life to the tracery of her buildings and revealed unsuspected beauties in much of her architecture, I could not help contrasting, as I doubt not many here contrasted, the fierce and deadly flames, lit stealthily by treacherous and assassin hands, which first ushered in the dark night about to spread itself as a funereal pall over this much-tried land, with the genial and peaceful light spread by thousands of loyal hands over this Metropolis in token of joy and gratitude for peace restored, of hope for the future of India, of welcome and loyalty to the Sovereign who had just spoken as a Sovereign ought to speak to her people. So began, so ends this dark, mysterious page in our Indian History. And as the lurid and murderous flames of Meerut and Cawnpore, of Allahabad and Futtehgur, have been quenched and have given way before the mild and festive light which for one night made your capital a fairy scene, and justified its title, oft bestowed on it in mockery, of the City of Palaces—so may we hope, with God’s help, will the hideous flames of havoc and treason and civil war pale their ineffectual fires, and vanish for ever from our sky before the pure and steadfast and beneficent light of Loyalty, and Peace and Good-will, calling forth the latent virtues and developing the resources of the country in the dawning of a brighter and a happier day.”

“ The learned gentleman was loudly and repeatedly applauded during the delivery of his speech.”

After the usual thanks to the chair the meeting broke up.

*Seamen’s Mission, Jan. 21, 1859*

“ A public meeting to take into consideration the best means of forwarding the cause of this Mission, connected



as it is with the Colonial Church and School Society, took place in the Town Hall at 4½ p.m. on Thursday last. It was satisfactory to observe so large an attendance and among them so many of the leading members of the community, both of ladies and gentlemen, whose co-operation in the cause will, no doubt, raise it from the oblivion it which in has hitherto lain. But while the Society appears to have enlisted the sympathies of such men as Major-General Outram, the Hon'ble E. Currie, Mr. Ritchie, and our worthy Metropolitan, it must have been with considerable pain observed that there appeared to be almost an entire absence of that class from which the friends to the cause may have naturally expected considerable aid, the Merchant Marine.

"Among those present we noticed: The Lord Bishop, the Archdeacon, the Hon'ble E. Currie, Major-General Sir J. Outram, Mr. Ritchie, Revds. Moule, Mazuchelli, Burn, Driberg, Belcher, Cuthbert, Walters, Beamish, and Phelps, the Hon'ble H. B. Harington, Major Thuillier, Cols. Sale, A. Tucker, Scott, Baird Smith, Mr. E. Cowells, Captain James of the *Sutlej* and Capt. Toynbee of the *Hotspur*, Messrs. J. H. Norman, T. Garrett, and J. H. Fergusson, Dr. Fitzpatrick, Messrs. C. S. Hogg, H. Braddon, Cavorke, C. B. Stewart, Chapman, and R. Stuart Palmer.

"Mr. Ritchie, in seconding this proposition, said:

"'I am sure that all will cordially concur in the sentiments embodied in this Resolution, and in those expressed by the Lord Bishop, whom we rejoice to see among us, the foremost, as his revered predecessor ever was, in this in every good work. When we consider the peculiar position of the British sailor, the special temptations which beset him, his frank, generous, reckless, and improvident character which poets, novelists and dramatists have loved to paint, because, however high the colouring, it could scarcely appear overcharged or exaggerated, we should be unworthy the name of Englishmen, still less worthy of the name of Christians, if we did not desire to do all that in us lies to benefit a class of men so manly yet so childlike, so simple, yet so paradoxical, so able to defend others, so little able to protect themselves. To us Englishmen who are proud to call that ocean which these men navigate our "home upon the deep," the very name of the British sailor is sufficient to rouse emotions of good-will, based

on no romantic illusion, but on some of the best feelings of the human heart. Especially is this the case in a great emporium of commerce like this our city, to the quays of which many a swelling sail, wafted daily from the western world, brings with it its precious cargo of merchandize, and its still more precious freight of human beings, gifted with manly power and brave hearts, which we are all wont to appreciate, but also with immortal souls, which we are too apt to forget.

“ ‘But though all concur in the desire to benefit the sailor, many may doubt whether any means exist of really benefiting him, save by providing him with the physical comforts and decencies of life supplied by a Sailors’ Home, and ask almost in despair whether it be possible to reach with religious influences a class of men so given up on our shore to what I fear must be admitted to be our national sin of drunkenness, with its hideous train of vices, its desperate defiance of God and man. Nothing I believe can be more mistaken. The Sailors’ Home is an admirable institution—and is no doubt far better for the seaman than the squalid resorts of vice to which he too readily repairs. But our object is not to supersede, but to supplementize, the Home; not to check any effort made for its prosperity, but to supply that spiritual instruction, to infuse those religious principles without which a Home, however comfortable, is but a dreary resting-place, with which a home, however lowly, may be made more cheerful than a palace.

“ ‘All will admit that the ordinary ministrations of our Church will not suffice to give this instruction, and that some extraneous agency is needed. But many may doubt what that agency should be. The Lord Bishop has shewn what that agency should be in principle. Mr. Belcher, whose name I cannot pronounce without unfeigned respect, and to whom all honour and all thanks are due for his devotedness to the cause, has shewn by the labour of years what that agency can do in practice. But that gentleman is but one, while his flock, widely scattered, is numbered by thousands. Who would grudge to him a fellow-labourer to lighten his sacred, but exhausting, toils, to carry the word of God further than he, single-handed, can carry it? And by God’s help I trust the result of this meeting and of this movement in behalf of this mission

to the seamen, will raise up to him not only one, but several, fellow-labourers for the large and interesting field of work he has before him.

“ ‘ And let not those who take ■ chief interest in Missions to the Heathen suppose that the amount of money and energies which I trust will be devoted to this work will not also be useful in promoting theirs. It is a painful and unfortunately but too trite a reflection, that much of the good done among the natives of this country by our Mission is undone, and more than undone, by the ungodly lives, the profane and reckless conduct of men—born and brought up as Christians. The sight of a drunken English sailor is, I fear, more than a set-off against the voice of an earnest Christian preacher. The sight is one apt in our thoughtless moments to provoke a smile; but, for my part, I know no sight more mournful, more painfully depressing, than that of an English sailor, tantalized by drink, in the midst of sober Hindoos and Mahommedans, half terrified and half scoffing at the spectacle of a Christian degraded below the level of the brute beasts that perish; and the worst of it is that the mischief done is the greater by reason of the very good qualities of the man when sober. If the natives saw that the being thus brutalized was an outcast from his own race, cut off from his own community, ■ a rotten, useless branch, the sight would be merely painful, but would give no cause to the enemies of Christianity to triumph. But the keen-eyed native knows full well that the man thus degraded is one of a class at whose failings we wink with an indulgent eye, and of whose virtues we make a national boast—with fatal force may the scoffer at our faith point out to the incipient convert, or to the native on whom perhaps the words of the missionary are producing an effect: This is the result of English and Christian training in ■ class of whom all Englishmen are proud.

“ ‘ In fact, it is impossible to conceive two men more different from each other than the English sailor sober, and humanized by proper care, and the same sailor drunk, left to his own devices on shore. Bold, resolute, devoted, with the clear sky of heaven above his head, and the blue deep water of ocean beneath his feet, he is incapable of cruelty, and ready to give up his life in any act or duty of humanity. But the very same man on



shore, and drunk, too often becomes a brute, lost to all feelings of humanity as to all sense of decency. Is not the voice of the teacher required here, as much as in the case of the native, sober and decent of life, who lifts up his hands in amazement at such degradation of the European ?

“ ‘ And think not that the voice of the teacher will be thrown away. There is probably, as you have heard from Mr. Belcher, no man more accessible to such teaching when administered in a true, manly, healthful Christian spirit, than the English sailor, and I believe it to be a common error to suppose that that teaching makes on him an impression but for a moment, which fades away as soon as the voice which uttered it is silent. I believe that faithful religious training is never thrown away upon him, and that you would find that such training is no mean element in the discipline and well-being of a ship’s crew. Recent events in this country afford an illustration. Of the events of the late mutinies I know no single one which can be viewed with more unmixed satisfaction than the conduct and behaviour of the Naval Brigades, formed of men of Her Majesty’s and of the Indian Navy. Conspicuous among those brave men were the crews of the *Shannon* and the *Pearl*, names that will never be forgotten in Calcutta. It is not their prowess in the field to which I allude, though this has never been surpassed even by British sailors, but their admirable steadiness, good conduct and humanity throughout a most trying campaign, and under circumstances of great temptation. No single instance of outrage to unoffending man, woman, or child has occurred in either case. I know that these Brigades were commanded by two of the best commanders of the English Navy, the late lamented Sir William Peel and our gallant friend, Capt. Sotheby ; and that to the steady discipline enforced by them and their officers must be attributed much of the good conduct of their men. But I am sure that these gallant officers would be the first to allow that much of it was also due to the faithful preaching of men whose labours were silent and unostentatious, unknown to fame, too apt to be forgotten and passed over, the excellent Chaplains of those vessels, whose time and energies have been devoted to their men, and who shrunk not from accompanying their charge in the midst of hardships and dangers.



“ ‘It is most painful to turn from this picture, and to compare with it the conduct of some of those men from the merchant service, whom the exigencies of the Government compelled it to employ during the late crisis, men who had received no religious instruction, and were truly destitute of spiritual help, both before and after. They left Calcutta equally brave in the field with their brethren of the Navy. Some of the detachments from the merchant service have, I regret to say, presented a sad contrast in their conduct towards the natives of this country. No less than four cases of brutal homicide committed by men of different Brigades under the influence of drink upon unoffending natives, in one of which a little girl, in the other a sick and helpless man, were the victims, came before me officially within the space of as many months. And this is not the worst. For in some of these cases, so demoralized and so lost to a sense of the value of human life are their comrades, that they lend no aid to identify the culprits, and the crime thus in some instances escapes unpunished. It would be too much to say that the whole difference of conduct was to be accounted for by the difference in religious training which the two classes of men had received. But all experience warrants us in saying that the contrast would not have been so glaring, the balances of crime against the men from the merchant ships so overwhelming, had they received the religious advantages, as the Government, to its honour, now procures for the gallant seamen of its own Navy.

“ ‘Now I say that our honour, our welfare in this country are concerned in doing what we can to supply to the men of the merchant service those advantages of religious instruction which shall put them, in point of good conduct and humanity, on a footing with their brethren of the Navy. Who could listen without a blush of shame, as a Christian and an Englishman, to the piteous tale told by the father of the little girl I have spoken of—to the widow of the murdered man—of the foul deed done in sheer wantonness and drunkenness, whereby the one had become childless and the other a widow, at the hands of English sailors ? . . .

“ ‘And if there be any one to whom such an appeal could be made in vain, there is another which must reach the most hardened, matter-of-fact mind. Trust the defence

of this country to such men as those of the *Shannon* and the *Pearl*, and you are safe. Their valour will protect you in war, their good conduct, their steady principles, will conciliate the people of the country in peace. Trust the defence of the country to such men as the poor, untaught, neglected, drunken homicides I have mentioned, and sooner or later their brutal ignorance would draw down a curse upon us, and we should be driven justly, in shame and dishonour, from the land throughout which their wantonness and violence would make the British name a bye-word of execration."

## CHAPTER VIII

1859

### LETTERS TO HIS WIFE

IN March, 1859, my mother came home, bringing Richmond and myself with her and leaving Elinor alone in my father's charge. From March to September, when my father was himself to rejoin the family, he wrote long letters to my mother, pouring out his heart to her, and longing more and more to put an end to separation and to start an English home. In September he arrived, just in time to welcome his youngest child, Edward, born at Brighton. He could only stay for a few weeks, and at the end of the year my parents turned their faces back to India once more, taking Edward with them.

LETTERS, 1859

*To his Wife*

CALCUTTA, *March 3, 1859.*

MY BELOVED AUGUSTA,

. . . I cannot tell you how much I rejoice that I spent those last two days with you on board the steamer, or how much it broke the misery of parting. I was quite glad, too, that you got under weigh on Friday morning before we did, as it was a relief to watch your beautiful ship glide away so smoothly and with such an air of security. I should have been very sorry to have left you at anchor. I watched you from the bridge of our steamer when you got under weigh, and tried in vain to catch sight of the form I loved so well. But some good-natured fellow lifted up one of the little men, I think Gerald, several times at the gangway at the last moment, and it cheered me much to think that I was probably receiving a final Hooray from his dear voice.

We weighed anchor about 12.30; and got up to Calcutta most comfortably the next morning before 10, after an excellent night. The only drawback was the company of the dreadful Mrs. Grierson, the Danish woman, who endeavoured, and partly with success, to secure the sympathies of a worthy and philanthropic countryman of hers, a German Professor, on board, and vowed that she was the most oppressed and ill-used of women, forced from the ship against her will, etc., etc. . . .

That evening I dined with my native "Brother"—Ram Persad Roy—at a party given by him to good Binny Colvin. It was a most pleasant party—Beadon and Blunt, near whom I sat, being very agreeable.

While completely asleep in the room near the drawing-room—which is my new sleeping-room—I was awakened at about one o'clock by the announcement that "Low Sahib aia." On turning into a dressing-gown, I found that young Irvine had left his big steamer for want of water, and had come on with Frederick Lushington in the "Canning." He was soon fast asleep in the outer room, which was ready for him. I was rewarded for the break in my sleep by receiving your dear little note, which had been handed to Irvine Low, I presume by McLean, as he said it was a gentleman who came from the steamer. I am delighted to hear the good accounts it gave, though only a few hours later than my leaving you.

I have great news to tell you about the Chief Justiceship; Mr. Peacock is to have it. . . .

### *To his Wife*

CALCUTTA, *March 8, 1859.*

. . . My Sunday drive on the course with Irvine Low in the buggy made me feel very sad by its contrast with our happy drives before church. Mr. Richards gave us a beautiful sermon in his best style from the text, "My ways are not as your ways." We are very fortunate in our two prédicateurs. On Tuesday I dined at the Bar dinner, the last Sir James Colville will give, and was pleasantly seated near him and Sir Mordaunt Wells, whom I continue to like. On Wednesday morning I drove furiously to Kiddepur to be in time for Miss Lambert's wedding, at the church there. Her married life did not begin very



auspiciously, as a tremendous storm came on at 2 o'clock, the hour at which she was to start for Budge-Budge by water. During the next three days we had almost continuous rain, with strong gusts of wind. I thought much about you and the dear boys exposed to this violence between Madras and Ceylon, but trusted that they might not extend so far South. . . .

### To

CALCUTTA, March 20-23.

. . . Strachey,<sup>1</sup> too, at tea was very amiable and pleasant. Mrs. Grant in great spirits and overflowing with wit. Yesterday, Monday, was a day passed a good deal out of the general routine. Colvile delivered his last judgment, and, while in the course of doing so, I found it was generally wished that I should say a few farewell words to him. Having already fired my whole broadside into him at the dinner, I felt that the parting shots would sound rather like a popgun—but I fired it and send you the result in to-day's Englishman. We were both much affected, but he accused me afterwards of making him make two of the worst speeches he ever made, being on each occasion much overwhelmed by what I said. My dinner speech was much the better of the two, and will have been better worth reading, had any reporter been present.

### To his Wife

CALCUTTA, June 5-12, 1859.

. . . I have been appointed with Colonel Baird Smith and John Ferguson to determine on a site for the statue of Lord Dalhousie, which is coming out, and for that of Lord Wellesley, which Lord Canning is going to give up to the Town. There will be a very large surplus, about R. 78,000 (£7,800) of subscriptions disposable. A museum, a Lecture Hall, a Rotunda, a market, a public garden, are among the objects which have found staunch supporters.<sup>2</sup>

### To his Wife

CALCUTTA, June 12-18, 1859.

I have heard of the death of a poor Pilot whom you never saw, but whom I had had several times as a witness

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Strachey.

<sup>2</sup> Dalhousie Institute was built.

and liked much, named Lang. He was the Pilot of the Alma, not the steamer, but a sailing ship, which touched the sands at the Sandheads in a gale of wind last week and foundered. Many of the crew and some passengers were saved, but the poor Pilot and Captain have never been heard of since. What makes his loss the more distressing is that it was the last trip he intended to make, and that he was going home to his family by this very steamer, with a competency he had saved. He was perhaps the best of all the Pilots, and had shortly before performed a feat which all his brethren viewed with admiration, in bringing up the "Nemesis" with scarcely an inch or two of water to spare. It had been thought impossible to bring her up, and Captain Reddie had somewhat tardily despatched a steamer to bring the letters, which met the "Nemesis" a little below Garden Reach. The Reddie was wroth and threatened the next time to report the Pilot to Government. "I shan't give you many opportunities, as I'm going away," was the poor fellow's answer. It was he who, you may remember, gave the capital answer to Peterson, when cross-examining him, and trying to make out that it would have been thought a disgrace at the Bank Hall to run his ship upon the ground, but none to run down another. "Suppose you had done your best to avoid running the other ship down, and in doing so could not help running your own aground, wouldn't you have been disgraced at the Bank Hall?" "No more disgraced than you will be for losing this case," was the ready answer. There was a likeness to John Peter Grant in the genial humour of the man and in his voice and laugh.

I yesterday saw Lord Canning on business, and after that was over he quite affected me by reading a portion of a letter he had just received from poor Lady Waterford. I think I told you that on the announcement of the death, I wrote a few lines of condolence to Lord Canning, referring to my acquaintance 30 years ago with Lord Waterford, and to my youthful admiration of his character. He sent this note to Lady Waterford and the extract he read me was from her reply. Poor soul! a very slight expression of sympathy seemed to touch her deeply, and she expressed herself pleased and consoled by the appreciation of her husband's character in youth by his old school-fellow.

She had shown the letter to the Primate<sup>1</sup> (that noble, apostolic-looking man we have sometimes talked about) and he to some other member of the family, one of whom remembered me, though much my junior at Eton, and sent a very kind message to me. To poor Lady Waterford the blow must indeed be a terrible one: and the absence of children must prevent much of the wholesome exertion of the mind to rally after such a shock. But she seems to bear her bereavement with great resignation and sweetness. This little incident has more than ever convinced me of the great kindness of Lord Canning's heart, and of the utter untruth of the common character of coldness and indifference ascribed to him by the discontented Anglo-Saxons of India. Lord Canning and party have been staying lately at Barrackpore, and will probably continue there till I start, and when we return he will be in the N.W., so that probably I shall not see much of him for a long time. I cannot help feeling great regard for one who shows so much for us on all occasions. Nothing can exceed his kindness: and I feel my attachment to him much strengthened by the frankness and candour with which he on all occasions treats me. He is one of the *sincerest* men I ever met, and it is most pleasant to feel that you can rely so entirely on this quality in a man holding a position in which it is often so difficult to be sincere, and so convenient to be the reverse. . . .

*To his Wife*

CALCUTTA, July 18, 1859.

. . . I now trust that there is increasing hope of our being spared the fearful calamity of a war between England and France. The rapid and brilliant successes of the French emperor are more likely to secure peace, I trust, than any other that the campaign could have taken. If he can continue to drive the Austrians out of Italy, excluding Venice, this season, without the interference of the rest of Germany in Austrian politics, the prospects of a general peace are I trust very hopeful. I don't believe him to be a good man, but I believe him to be a most sagacious one (after the fashion of the world), and the glory of driving the Austrians from Italy in a single cam-

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Sumner.

paign, giving a national government to Italy, or by the King of Sardinia, and the retiring to France without setting foot on Austrian territory (save that which he restores to Italy), will so greatly exceed that of any monarch of modern times, and will tend to raise France and him so much in the eyes of Europe, and to render him so beloved and respected in France itself, that I think he has fully wisdom enough to prefer it to the more uncertain, baneful and fleeting glory of imitating his uncle's ambitious course, at the risk of his uncle's downfall.

*To his Wife*

*August 11, 1859.*

My letter this time can only be a P.S. to the last, assuring you that I and Nelly and all friends here are quite well "up to date," as the mercantile phrase is. I found out yesterday evening that I might have postponed my letter by the steamer for 24 hours, as the steamer was detained for a day by the government in consequence of this horrid defeat of the English force in China.<sup>1</sup> It is supposed that troops will be sent, and it no doubt will be of importance to strike a blow soon to indicate our character with these incomprehensible Chinese. Possibly some of the dismissed regiments,<sup>2</sup> who are still eating the bread of idleness, may be made available for the service, and it will certainly be an excellent opportunity to offer our friends of the 2nd Grenadiers, whose retention as a pay receiving Corps used to move my bile so much, the option of going to China as a Volunteer Corps or of being disbanded: European troops we are not in a condition to spare at present—unless indeed the Company's Europeans who are about to take their discharge are offered a bounty to stay and serve against John Chinaman. I am sorry to see, among the officers wounded, the name of Captain Shadwell, whom we knew badly wounded in the Mutiny.

3 o'clock has struck, and I haven't till now been able to snatch a moment to finish this. News of the Peace<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bruce, British Minister, proceeding to Peking, was stopped at the mouth of the Pei-ha and was repulsed.

<sup>2</sup> European Regiments of the E.I. Company who were reduced on reorganisation after the Mutiny.

<sup>3</sup> The Peace of Villafranca.



has reached us, but only by Telegraph, the accounts by which are unsatisfactory and contradictory. It will be a strange thing if, after all the abuse we have been lavishing on the Emperor for his ambition, our present ground of complaint should be his excessive moderation. If the Venetian territory is left intact to Austria, it will appear a most lame and impotent conclusion of such a war, but I don't know with what grace we who stood up so stoutly for the Treaty of Vienna in its integrity can join in the cry against Louis Napoleon for respecting this portion of them. . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Peace of Villafranca, afterwards translated into the Peace of Zurich, terminated France's war with Austria.

## CHAPTER IX

1861

### JOURNEY UP COUNTRY

My father had had serious warnings in the hot weather of 1860 that his health could not be trifled with, and that the pressure of nineteen years of the severest brain-work in an exhausting climate was telling upon him. When he was appointed to Council, an immense load of trying court work was taken off his shoulders, and he discusses the future with serenity. When he got away from Calcutta to Allahabad and Lucknow to join Lord Canning and his new colleagues, his letters are those of a school-boy in point of healthy enjoyment. He got up to Mussoorie and saw the Himalayan snows with a heart full of joy and thankfulness. His chief thought was his regret that his wife was not with him "to share the gladness and enjoyment which the sight of God's beautiful works, in the alternation of snow and verdure, sunshine and shade, inspires." His letters to Gussie and Blanche are fuller, and his counsels to his beloved Gussie more grave and affectionate than they had been ever before. In the last letter that I can give to his sisters, between whom and him there was complete trust and confidence, increased by gratitude for their having acted as parents to his children for nine years, he refers to the loss of his "dear gallant Richmond," and other old friends. His last sentence is an affectionate reference to his father.

## LETTERS, 1861

*From Hugh Hill (his former legal coach) to W. Ritchie*

WITHERSFIELD, NEWMARKET,

October 1, 1861.

I fear you will think I have delayed too long in answering your letter. I certainly have delayed longer than I had intended, but, being unable to write myself, many matters have intervened which have forbidden my carrying my intention into effect. You are right, my dear Friend, in anticipating that I should read your letter with pleasure, yet with pain. With pleasure at the good report it gives of your well-doing and the well-being of your wife and children, with pain at the account you give of your fears as to your health giving way. I trust, however, it may please God to continue to you good health for many years to come. With regard to the question which you put to me, I can see no possible objection to an Advocate-General retiring from the Bar in India and wishing to confine his practice at the English Bar to appeals before the P.C., being appointed Q.C. On the contrary, I think such an appointment would be right and proper, having respect to the P.C. Bar. The only matter that presses on my mind as an objection to what you mention is that the amount of practice before the P.C. in Indian appeals, even though you might be in all, would be of such small amount as not to answer your object.

I cannot complain. I have so many mercies to be thankful for, but I am conscious of a break-up which sooner or later must terminate at all events my professional life. I have to thank you for your kindness to both Woodroffe and Baylis, and in the hope, if I should be spared to see you on your return to England, that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you well in every sense,

Ever believe me, my dear Ritchie,

Yours most truly,

HUGH HILL.

*To his Sisters*

October 7, 1861.

MY DEAREST SISTERS,

I fear the news this will bring will make you unhappy, or at least uneasy, about me, although it ought

to be matter of rejoicing rather than of regret. I have had greatness thrust upon me in the shape of a seat in the Council here as Legal Member, notwithstanding my refusal of the post when it was proffered to me in June by Lord Canning. But it is now offered with the clear understanding that I am not to hold it for a day beyond my own convenience, and that if my health requires me to go home next year, I am to be quite at liberty to do so, either for six months, returning for the following cold weather, on very favourable terms as to salary—or for good. Offered in so flattering a way, and with so much consideration for my convenience, it would have been impossible for me to refuse it, even if it had been quite clear that the option had been left to me; but as Sir Charles Wood says in his letter that he has just received Her Majesty's approval of the appointment it is not certain that the appointment may not have been already made and my old one vacated.<sup>1</sup> . . .

Our friends will, I doubt not, be much impressed by your announcement that your young tall brother is "le Ministre de la Justice" of India.

### *To his Wife*

GHYRA BUNGALOW, 165 miles from CALCUTTA,  
October 23, 1861.

I write a line from this, the first place at which we have halted for a meal, to let you know how famously well your man has got on hitherto. I got through all that I had to do in Calcutta very comfortably, though I am not guilty of the anomaly of not being hurried at last. I reached the train just in time yesterday evening, and had a most pleasant time to Raneegunje. Young Stewart is with me, and is a very pleasant and cheerful companion. We found the dâk carriage waiting for us, and got away from Raneegunje at 3 a.m. I slept most comfortably in my dâk carriage, which, with your appliances of resai, pillows, etc., is as comfortable as a carriage can be. In the morning I woke up quite brisk and had a long walk with young Stewart, after which I mounted the coach-box, which is not the bad eminence you imagine, and enjoyed

<sup>1</sup> Appointment made on September 6, 1861.



the view of the country. It really is very pretty, and there is a most delightful soft north breeze, which is already quite exhilarating. We crossed the first of our unbridged rivers in a boat, not very quickly it is true. After that operation, however, our good fortune to some extent deserted us, for though the roads are really on the whole in excellent order, I suppose they have already had their full effect on the poor horses, as our progress for the last 15 miles has been of the slowest, and indeed I am afraid we have not achieved more than 36 miles since we left Raneegunje—being at the rate of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour.

We arrived here at 1, and have had a most comfortable bath and breakfast, which have greatly refreshed me and made me keen to go on again. The sun is hot and the shelter of the bungalow is grateful, but I am very glad to have got over the heat of the day without any fatigue, and to be feeling so well and in such spirits. Don't be anxious, dearest, if you don't hear from me again till we reach Benares. I can't tell you how glad I am to think you are with the Eyres at their place (Fitaghur), which always seems to me to have the power of imparting better spirits than Calcutta. Tell Eyre the journey would be perfection if I could have him with me. . . .

### *To his Wife*

SHERGOTTY DAK BUNGALOW,  
October 24, 1861.

I can now make a most satisfactory report of my progress, dearest Guss, since I wrote yesterday after our late breakfast at Ghyra. Our horses improved greatly after that stage, and their pace increased from that of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour to the respectable one of 6, and we have got on as comfortably as possible. We had had a terribly long journey after crossing the first unbridged river, the Burra-kur. After breakfasting at Ghyra and starting again at 3, I found the sun, which was very hot, and the journey so long with an empty stomach, had given me a headache, which I feared would last. But on approaching the outskirts of my old friend, Parasnâth, about sunset, I got outside for 3 stages, and was delighted to find that the pure fresh hill air completely removed the headache, and

that when we halted for dinner at 8 I had a very good appetite. On starting again at 10, we had a beautiful moon to light up the scenery, which had lost none of its charms since my visit in 1856, and looked quite exquisite both in the fading sunlight and the moonlight. After a stage or two, however, my admiration for the scenery yielded to my sleepiness, and I slept as comfortably as in a bed till nearly six this morning, and then woke up quite lively and refreshed without a particle of headache. I walked 3 miles and the air was quite invigorating. The scenery continued very pretty. We got in here at 7.30 p.m., and I write this while waiting for dinner, to which I shall bring a tremendous appetite. I stick to my brandy and water and tea as beverages, and find I get on capitally with them, taking a bottle of cold tea without milk by way of precaution, but hardly ever having recourse to it. I continue to get on very well with young Stewart, and we have picked up a friend of his, Mr. Raban, a young cavalry officer, who is very agreeable and amusing, being always in the brightest spirits. So we are now 3 carriages in company, and whenever one of my young friends gets ahead he informs the lookers-on that the Governor-General is in the next carriage, which accounts for the most profound salaams of which I am at our halting-place the object! The views through the Dayur Pass which we went through to-day were beautiful, but the scenery has since fallen off, and we must expect it to be uninteresting for some time to come.

### *To his Wife*

BENARES, October 26, 1861.

We arrived here this morning after a most propitious journey. Nothing could be pleasanter than the travelling after the first day. The horses improved wonderfully as we got on, although, as the three best horses were kept for the Governor-General and his immediate suite, we were obliged to be content with the fourth and fifth best, which brought us on famously. After leaving Shergotty we crossed a river by moonlight and slept without a break till 4 a.m., when we reached another unbridged river. I turned out rather unwillingly, and in getting to the other

side the day was dawning so beautifully that it seemed hopeless to endeavour to resume our nap, so I and young Stewart walked on, breaking sometimes into a run to warm ourselves. We crossed the Sone yesterday morning, dragged majestically in our carriage all the way (except across the main stream itself, where you have to get into a boat) by six fine bullocks. The scene was really very amusing. The Rhotas Hills at a little distance have a very picturesque effect. We passed through a very interesting old place, Sasseram, where there is a fine old tomb in the centre of a large tank, of Shere Shah, an Emperor of India, who lived here at Sasseram, conquered the Emperor of Delhi, and intended to make Sasseram the Delhi of India. (So says Mr. Lang's article.) The place had a very venerable aspect, in keeping with its respectable history. Along the road we saw considerable traces of the havoc done by the floods on all sides. Houses were swept away and many villagers perished.

This morning between 5 and 6 we crossed the Ganges at Rajghat, approached Benares, and had a lovely view of the Holy City. After we had got across it struck me, as the sun was just rising, that we should see the city to much greater advantage if we made our large ferry boat go about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile upstream, and we had a glorious view of the city, lit up by the rising sun. Nothing can be more picturesque than the subdued red brick and grey of the buildings in the distance. And the great mosque, with its lofty minarets, crowns the whole. We have got into a very comfortable hotel, which I preferred to going to General Campbell. We have had a very pleasant walk, and I have just had a most refreshing bath. I wish you could see in what health and spirits I am. I think I was never better or stronger or more capable of *enjoyment* in my life.

### *To his Wife*

ALLAHABAD, October 30, 1861.

You will have been shocked, as I was, to hear of the sudden death of poor dear Richmond Shakespear. The telegraphic message announcing the sad news was received here the day after I arrived, and turned all my pleasant anticipations into mourning. He died of bronchitis early

in the morning of yesterday, the 29th. The attack must have been fearfully sudden, as Bessie Irvine had written on the 24th to John Murray to say that he had been unwell, but was much better and was at Indore. Poor dear Sophy ! my heart quite bleeds to think of her desolate condition. . . .

This sad news has thrown such a damp on my spirits that I do not feel as if I should enjoy the trip I had looked forward to so much, even with John Murray, who had made all his arrangements to accompany me as a companion. But I daresay a day or two will restore my old spirits again ; as you know, I am very buoyant and disposed to cheerfulness, especially when I can get a change of scene. I am quite uncertain at this moment whether to go further than Lucknow, especially as I have every reason to think there may be more work for me in Calcutta, than I had hoped, in November. Nothing could exceed the enjoyment of my trip down to the moment the sad news reached me, but I wish it had come upon me anywhere rather than here, and I shall be glad to get away from this place, which otherwise I should have greatly enjoyed. I am in most excellent health and have gained extraordinarily in strength and vigour since leaving you at Ishapore. I wish you could be here in my beautiful double-poled tent, one nice sitting-room and two most comfortable bedrooms with bathroom, and everything complete on either side. . . .

### *To his Wife*

LUCKNOW, November 5, 1861.

I arrived at Lucknow all safe and well last night, and was most hospitably received by Mr. Yule, the Chief Commissioner, a brother of an old friend, and a delightful host. The Governor-General, Sir B. Frere, and the whole staff are also here, so that the house is, as you may imagine, full to overflowing, and our host and hostess, for Miss Yule is here, doing the honours very gracefully, have turned out into tents in the compound. I wish you could see how famously well I am looking, and in what spirits I am again now that I have got over the first gloom which the tidings of poor dear Richmond's death caused me. . . .



I have been delighted with the climate, the country and the hospitality I have met with everywhere. This is a glorious city, and I have greatly enjoyed the two days I have had here. A great meeting of all the Talookdars is to take place in an hour, and I must get ready for it. The object is to concert measures for the suppression of infanticide throughout the Province, which it appears has been very rife. To-night there is to be an illumination and fireworks, and late at night Lord Canning starts for Calcutta. As my train goes at 2 p.m. for Cawnpore, it is better for me to stay here till to-morrow. Sir B. Frere is a charming companion, and with him, Colonels Barrow and Bruce, I have seen the sights of Lucknow to great advantage.

The city is beautiful and the climate quite heavenly, with a light delicious air, as pure and exhilarating as that of the desert. The Durbar came off with great splendour yesterday, and was to my mind far more interesting than the function at Allahabad. The Oudh chiefs looked quite different men from what they did in Calcutta, and the building, a noble Mahomedan Kiosk on a large scale, coloured with the subdued red tint which has so struck my eye both here and at Benares, though in very different styles of buildings, showed off the ceremony with great effect. Besides, the meeting had an object which Durbars generally had not; and there was a look of purpose about the whole proceeding. Lord Canning looked and spoke admirably. In the evening we assembled on the banks of the Goomtee, and there was an illumination of one of the fine buildings of the city, which was very pretty and striking. After dinner Lord Canning started to Calcutta, while I start for Cawnpore to-day at two, taking the rail with John Murray. Nothing can exceed the kindness of everyone, and the hearty good-will with which every arrangement is made, to speed the parting as well as welcome the coming guest, is delightful. The interest of the associations of place, when you stand in the Residency or on any one of the numerous spots rendered immortal by the defence and relief, is extraordinary. And it is indeed rare to find so much of beauty mixed up with such interest of association. Sir Bartle Frere and I have, I believe, exhausted every possible sight of the city without in the least exhausting ourselves, and I find, on leaving

Lucknow, as if I could gladly go over and over again through the scenes we have visited.

You may hear from someone in Lord Canning's staff that I had an upset not far from Lucknow on coming from Cawnpore. I wasn't in the least hurt nor my effects, or poor B. . . . (the photographer), who being on the top caused me some anxiety. A wretched valet of Lord Canning came riding by my carriage, while he had also an escort of sowars, who were in attendance on Lord Canning, galloping behind. My animal got frightened, bolted off the road, and deposited me in the carriage, upside down, in a deep hole full of mud and water, the safest place that could have been selected for the purpose. The extraordinary thing was that not even a glass was broken by the smash, and I didn't feel the slightest bruise or shake. The sowars behaved admirably, pulled up in an instant, jumped off their horses, and received me in their arms with shouts of "Sahib bach-gyā" (has escaped), when I emerged, and righted the carriage and horse, which was nearly suffocated, in wonderfully short time. So far from alarming you, dearest, the little adventure should reassure you, as it shows how little danger a great smash in a dâk carriage may produce !

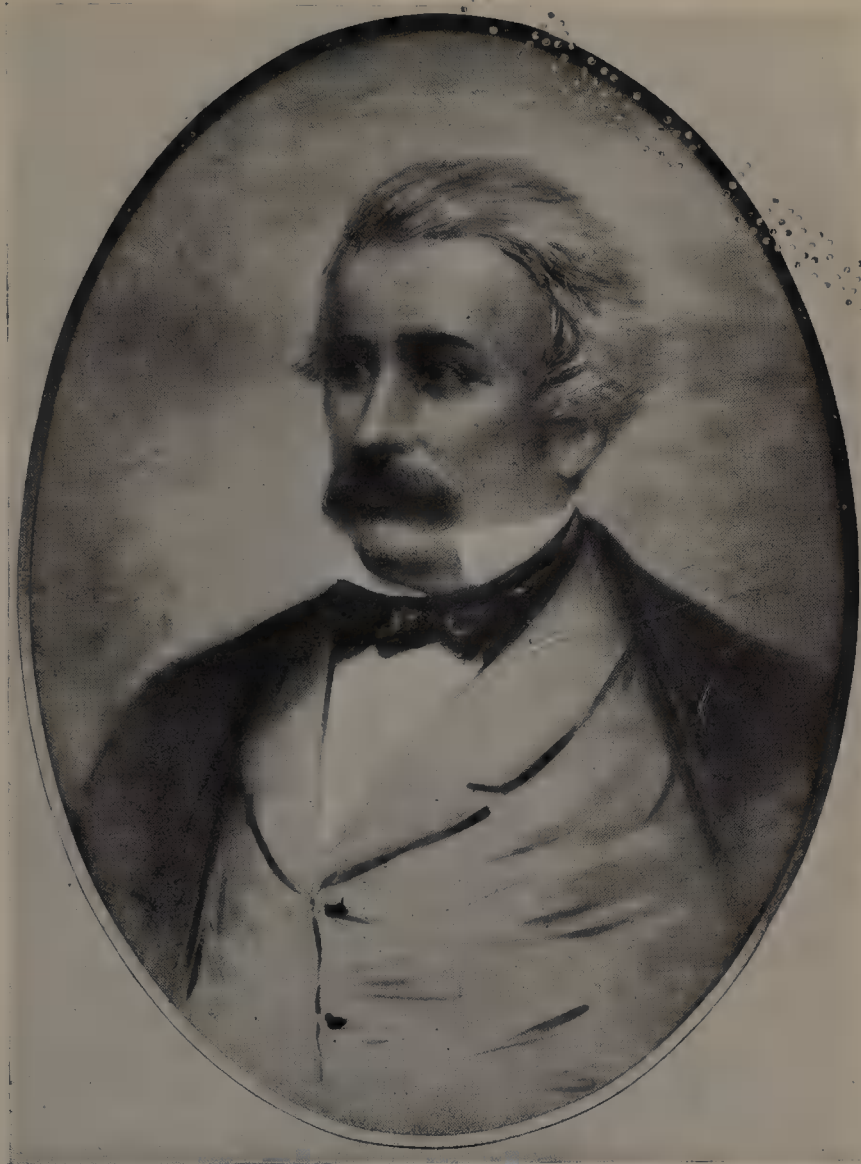
Here we may insert an extract from W. M. T.'s Round-about Paper "On Letts's Diary," on hearing of the news of Sir Richmond Shakespear's death and Mr. Ritchie's promotion :

"And now, brethren, may I conclude this discourse with an extract out of that great diary, the newspaper ? I read it but yesterday, and it has mingled with all my thoughts since then. Here are the two paragraphs, which appeared following each other :

" ' Mr. R., the Advocate-General of Calcutta, has been appointed to the post of Legislative Member of the Council of the Governor-General. '

" ' Sir R. S., Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, died on the 29th of October, of bronchitis. '

"These two men, whose different fates are recorded in two paragraphs and half a dozen lines of the same newspaper, were sisters' sons. In one of the stories by the



SIR RICHMOND SHAKESPEAR, K.C.B.

1881



present writer, a man is described tottering 'up the steps of the ghaut,' having just parted with his child, whom he is despatching to England from India. I wrote this, remembering in long, long distant days, such a ghaut, or river-stair, at Calcutta; and a day when, down those steps to a boat which was in waiting, came two children, whose mothers remained on the shore. One of these ladies was never to see her boy more; and he, too, is just dead in India, 'of bronchitis, on the 29th October.' We were first-cousins; had been little playmates and friends from the time of our birth; and the first house in London to which I was taken was that of our aunt, the mother of his Honour the Member of Council. His Honour was even then a gentleman of the long robe, being, in truth, a baby in arms. We Indian children were consigned to a school of which our deluded parents had heard a favourable report, but which was governed by a horrible little tyrant, who made our young lives so miserable that I remember kneeling by my little bed of a night, and saying, 'Pray God, I may dream of my mother!' Thence we went to a public school; and my cousin to Addiscombe and to India. 'For thirty-two years,' the paper says, 'Sir Richmond Shakespear faithfully and devotedly served the Government of India, and during that period but once visited England, for a few months and on public duty. In his military capacity he saw much service, was present in eight general engagements, and was badly wounded in the last. In 1840, when a young lieutenant, he had the rare good fortune to be the means of rescuing from almost hopeless slavery in Khiva 416 subjects of the Emperor of Russia; and, but two years later, greatly contributed to the happy recovery of our own prisoners from a similar fate in Cabul. Throughout his career this officer was ever ready and zealous for the public service, and freely risked life and liberty in the discharge of his duties. Lord Canning, to mark his high sense of Sir Richmond Shakespear's public services, had lately offered him the Chief Commissionership of Mysore, which he had accepted, and was about to undertake, when death terminated his career.'

"When he came to London the cousins and playfellows of early Indian days met once again, and shook hands. 'Can I do anything for you?' I remember the kind fellow asking. He was always asking that question: of all

kinsmen ; of all widows and orphans ; of all the poor ; of young men who might need his purse or his service. I saw a young officer yesterday to whom the first words Sir Richmond Shakespear wrote on his arrival in India were, 'Can I do anything for you ?' His purse was at the command of all. His kind hand was always open. It was a gracious fate which sent him to rescue widows and captives. Where could they have had a champion more chivalrous, a protector more loving and tender ?

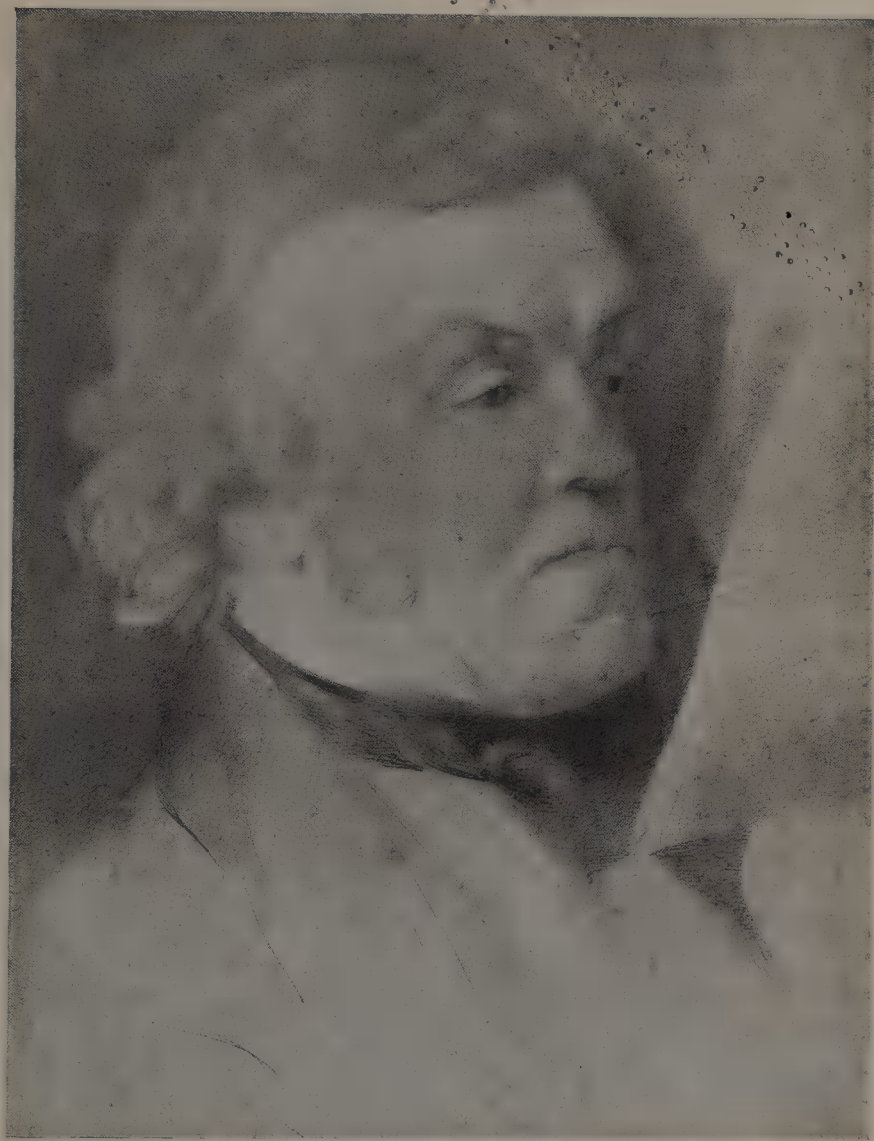
"I write down his name in my little book, among those of others dearly loved, who, too, have been summoned hence. And so we meet and part ; we struggle and succeed ; or we fail and drop unknown on the way. As we leave the fond mother's knee, the rough trials of childhood and boyhood begin ; and then manhood is upon us, and the battle of life, with its chances, perils, wounds, defeats, distinctions. And Fort William guns are saluting in one man's honour,<sup>1</sup> while the troops are firing the last volleys over the other's grave—over the grave of the brave, the gentle, the faithful Christian soldier."

### *To his Wife*

AGRA, November 9, 1861.

I write these lines while just on the point of starting for Meerut, after passing two days and one night here. I am quite fascinated by the beauty of the Taj and of several other of the grand buildings of the Mogul Emperor here and in the neighbourhood, and tear myself away from them with the greatest reluctance. I do so deeply regret, dearest, that you did not come with me, and that I have not had the additional happiness of having you by my side while gazing on the lovely and enchanting outlines of the Taj ; first, by the most beautiful sunrise from a distance on entering the city, then, with the full light of the sun shining upon it, till it set in splendour behind the grand old fort opposite it—and, lastly, by the soft silvery light of a lovely moon. I have never been so delighted with any building in my life, and the memory of it will remain imprinted on my mind while I live. All descriptions must fail to give any idea of its beauty, and any picture,

<sup>1</sup> W. R. *obit* March 22, 1862.



WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.  
From a portrait in chalks by Samuel Laurence.

1843



model or photograph gives one but the faintest notion of the exquisite symmetry and almost living beauty of the Tomb itself and its glorious minarets and mosques. The old Fort too and the buildings in it are full of interest and beauty. Red stone, with the most dazzling white marble standing out from it in relief, meets one in all these grand Mahomedan buildings here and have a beautiful effect. I have had Mr. Temple<sup>1</sup> as a companion over the Fort, the Taj, the tomb of Akbar at Secundra, 5 miles off, and at Fatehpur Sikra, wonderfully grand and beautiful, 22 miles off, from which we have just returned. It would have been impossible to have a more delightful guide, for he is admirably versed in the history of every place, and his explanation makes the scene doubly interesting. I have never passed two days that interested me more in my life. I am in wonderfully good health, taking a great quantity of exercise and sleeping beautifully at night, whether in bed or in a dâk carriage. John Murray is with me, and makes travelling much pleasanter.

### *To his Wife*

MUSSOORIE, November 18, 1861.

I write you a few lines from this lovely place, with the most enchanting view of the snowy range from the window at which I am sitting, and with nothing to damp the keen enjoyment of this delightful climate, and scenery, save the regret that you are not with me, dearest, to share the gladness and enjoyment which the sight of God's beautiful works in the alternations of snow and verdure, sunshine and shade, inspires. We have been most hospitably received by an old brother officer of John Murray's, Major Reid, who lives here with his wife and family in a house beautifully situated on the top of one of the hills, and has made us most comfortable, giving us sleeping rooms in an adjoining house! His wife is a charming old lady, and his eldest daughter a very sweet girl. In starting from Roorkee we were seated most comfortably in dhoolies, a nice conveyance in which I found I slept as well as in a dâk carriage, to Dehra Dun, and were there most hospitably received. We met Major Macpherson, who com-

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Temple.

mands the celebrated Goorkha regiment (which among other sights we arrived in time to see marching on parade), were driven over by him to the two great tea-gardens seven miles off, breakfasted with him and his nice little wife, drove a score of miles in a buggy to Rajpore, and there got two famous hill-ponies to carry us up the hill. Mine was a famous fellow named Alexander, all legs, like a dray-horse, who carried me up in most gallant style, without a false step, and without making anything of my weight, though we trotted cheerily as we had a chance of seeing the sun setting on the snow on the further side of the hill. With a brisk walk up the steepest part, we came just in time to witness the most lovely sunset lighting up the glorious line of the Himalayas. Nothing finer can be imagined, and the same feeling came over me which I remember, twenty-eight years ago, when first catching sight of the Alps, an overpowering sense of the goodness of the Almighty and of gratitude to Him for having permitted me to see so glorious a sight. We then went on and took up our quarters with the Reid family, and have found him the most hospitable of hosts and the most excellent and unwearied of cicerones. I was up this morning long before sunrise, to witness the effect of sunrise, which lighted up first the highest and most distant snows, and then the whole range of the Himalayas, and lastly the opposite hills, with their brilliant peaks of equal height with our own, and the lovely valley at one's feet. Nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the gradual lighting up of the whole scene ; one could never feel tired of gazing on the hundred varying views which meet one from every hill-top and valley by whatever light they are viewed ; and the glorious, fresh, invigorating air, the purest and coolest that can be imagined, without being keen or piercing, and without any stirring wind, enabled me to get through an immense amount of exercise without fatigue. From six to ten this morning, after starting on an excellent cup of tea and biscuits, I have been continually walking and climbing, and feeling every view, widely as they differ, beautiful. I have just had a breakfast which would astonish even you, who know the capacities of my appetite, when in full vigour, and am about to start again on Alexander for an expedition to Landaur, I feeling as fresh and able to walk again as if I hadn't been on my legs at all

to-day. I am quite delighted with my strength and capacity for enjoyment; and the fact that I sleep so well at night, and awake so refreshed in the morning, shows that it is not merely a temporary excitement which carries me through. I have quite made up my mind that it would be a sin to let you leave the country without seeing the beautiful scenes which have so delighted me, and, somehow or other, we must manage a trip here, at a more leisurely pace than that I have been compelled to. You can't conceive how I long for you here, dearest, and how I grieve to think that you will not have had the same health-giving change of air and the same intense enjoyment which I have had. . . .

At Agra, as I told you, I was enchanted with some of the loveliest works of man; but I must confess that those of God, as seen in His eternal hills, were far lovelier and nobler.

### *To his Sisters*

CALCUTTA, December 9, 1861.

MY DEAREST SISTERS,

What sad events have happened since I started on my journey! Our poor dear noble Richmond's death was a sad blow to me. What a dreadful one it must have been to his poor wife and children, his sisters, too, who were so proud and fond of him, and so justly! God in His mercy help them all! Then our sweet, much-loved Lady Canning—Janie, you I know will grieve much to hear of the loss of one so kind—so winning—so gifted. I can hardly yet realize to myself the fact that she is gone. She is the last person with whom we associated the idea of sickness and death. Alas! she fell a sacrifice to her own fearlessness, and the disregard of self which has ever marked her so strongly. Never have I seen woman of birth and rank with so much true nobility of mind and soul, so sweet, so gentle, so lovable! He bears up wonderfully, poor man, though the blow was a sudden and terrible one to him. It is most affecting to see his efforts to be cheerful, the determination with which he forces himself to take an interest in business. I enjoyed my trip, though it was marked by such sad events, more than any letter or words can describe, and, as Augusta will have

told you, I am looking and feeling so well and strong that it is difficult to believe I am the same man who was so groaning and croaking in the rains. My present work has hitherto been delightful, and I must tell you what a relief it has been to me, after the old work, of which I had grown sick. God bless you, my dear ones.

### *To his Children*

CALCUTTA, December 9, 1861.

. . . The scenery became very pretty when you got 40 miles or so beyond Raneegunje, as the road goes by my old acquaintance Parasnāth, a noble mountain rising straight from the plains in a beautiful park-like country and through a very striking pass called the Dayur Pass; but, after leaving the Sone River, the hills disappear and the country continues perfectly flat all the way to the foot of the Himalayas, though in parts very pretty and interesting. On the morning of the fourth day, very early, we got to Benares, where I for the first time crossed and had a good sight of the Ganges. It is here a beautiful stream, and the old town, the name of which (Kashi) signifies the Shining City, and which well deserves its name, being as picturesque as it is sacred in Hindoo eyes, is beautifully situated upon its banks. It is the great stronghold of the Brahmins and their religion, and most of the buildings are Hindoo; but the most striking building of all is a grand mosque, built by the great Mahomedan Emperor Humayun, which bears an inscription that he built it out of the ruins of innumerable Hindoo temples he had laid low. From the minaret of this mosque there is a most beautiful view of the city, the river, and the country round. It was rather a tight squeeze for a portly paterfamilias like myself, as towards the top it became very narrow, and the steps are each of them about a foot in height, so as to make a long climb in the dark rather fatiguing, but the view was so beautiful that, having been up at sunset, I could not resist going up again the next morning soon after sunrise. Some of the streets are so narrow you cannot walk two abreast, and rounding one or two corners the jampan (or small chair it is considered



dignified to travel in through the streets) regularly stuck, though the thoroughfare was one of the most crowded and populous in the city. The most beautiful sight at Benares, however, is that of the river front at sunrise from the river itself. I got into a great kind of state barge the Rajah sent me, and dropped away very slowly down the whole river front. Every ghat was crowded with hundreds of people coming down to bathe and to bring offerings of flowers, and for two miles and more the most beautiful and picturesque houses, some very old, some modern, but all of a beautiful red stone mixed with grey, or so well painted as to look exactly like the stone itself, and interspersed with fine spreading trees, and with every possible variety of architecture, line the bank. Some of these are temples, but most of them houses for the entertainment of strangers, which the different Hindu Rajahs vied with each other in building on as handsome a scale as possible to accommodate their subjects and themselves on their journeys to the venerable city. You will some day read Bishop Heber's journal, in which he gives a charming description of Benares. The painful thing about all this beauty, however, is to think of the miserable and disgusting superstition of the hundreds and thousands of its inhabitants and pilgrims, and of the mingled luxury and ignorance of the fat, idle, useless Brahmins, who live here and rule the minds of their poor countrymen quite enthralled with their wretched decrees. I could not help thinking of St. Paul, when he looked on the beautiful city of Athens, where the gods, false though they were, had so much of poetry and beauty about them, and whose spirit was moved within him, because he saw the city was so given up to superstition. There were more pleasant features in a beautiful English college with pretty grounds, and some very kind English friends who received me most hospitably. On the 28th I started for Allahabad, and reached the Governor-General's camp in nice time before dark. Nothing could be more cheerful or pleasant than the tent which I found prepared for me, in which the whole family, aunties and all, at a squeeze might have managed to fit. The G. G.'s pavilion, with its large Durbar tents, were in the centre. On either side, at right angles, ran a grand row of large tents, of which Papa's was one, forming a street wider than the Rue Royale, and on either side

again a camp of the several regiments which had been summoned together, was pitched. Nothing could be pleasanter than the dinners in the grand pavilion tent. One felt all along as if one were at a banquet on the stage; but I must break off here as dinner has been announced in about a quarter of an hour. I must say *la suite au prochain numéro*, though I fear you won't be so anxious to reach the *prochain* when you know it is to contain a continuation of my prosaic travels.

God bless you, my darlings.

### *To his Children*

CALCUTTA, December 24, 1861.

I think my last letters brought me to Allahabad and installed me in a very comfortable tent there. I was quite delighted to fall in with my dear friend John Murray, who commands the Jat Irregular Horse, which the Government, in token of his gallantry in leading them, calls Murray's Jat Horse. The next morning, however, a most sad piece of news reached me—the death of my dear and gallant cousin, Sir Richmond Shakespear, at Indore. We had been boys together and he took me to school when I first went there—a small delicate boy of 9—and most kindly he protected me, as if he had been my elder brother. I had hoped to meet him at Allahabad, as some of the Chiefs who were to receive the Star were under his charge—but instead of seeing him the sad news of his death reached me here—while at Allahabad. The news, of course, was a sad drawback to my enjoyment. It was a comfort to me how thoroughly loved and respected he was by all who knew him—natives as well as Europeans. Among the native Princes there were two of them, Scindia (the Rajah or King of Gwalior), and the Begum of Bhopal, had known him for years and were greatly distressed to hear of his death.

Among my duties at Allahabad was that of paying visits of ceremony to the four new knights, all of whom were Sovereign Princes, and who kept up the outward state of royalty by a ceremonial as precise as that of France under the Grand Monarque. The Sovereign would come a certain

distance—generally to the door—to meet his visitor, would then take him by the hand and seat him on the nearest chair to himself in a semi-circle of chairs in which the ministers of the kingdom, generally including a Commander-in-Chief, a Chief Justice, a Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister (very grave-looking fellows indeed, and generally the more grandly dressed were those who had the least real power and the least power of brain), sat round. The conversation was rather a stiff affair, none of the interlocutors except the visitor and the monarch saying more than monosyllables. The most amusing of these visits was to the old Begum of Bhopal, a fine old lady who governs her country with a very firm hand, and was staunch and helpful to us during the mutiny. There were no less than four generations of female Royalty of Bhopal present—the Begum (the Mahommedan counterpart of Ranee, but signifying really a foreign Sovereign), who reminded me much of a snuffy, not overclean, old French lady, *en robe de chambre*, very voluble, with a very loud voice, and a very dirty handkerchief wrapped round her head, queer Mahommedan trousers, and delighting in a loud laugh and joke. Her mother, who looked like a superannuated ayah of 80, never spoke; the Begum's daughter, who still retains the fashion of the purda, and remains behind a screen, not showing her face, but joining every now and then in the conversation by a kind of inarticulate grunt; and her daughter, a very pretty little girl of 4 or 5, who played about all the time, and was the only good-looking representative of the sex there. In the midst of my efforts at conversation—very uphill—I became conscious that my chair had broken down under me, but I managed very cleverly, as I thought, to press myself in the very front of it, so that by remaining quite still I could prevent an actual descent to terra firma; but, unfortunately for me, the Commander-in-Chief, who had never spoken a word, but had been watching me curiously, called public attention to my peril and the condition of my chair, and I was forced to rise from it (narrowly escaping a prostration in so doing from the too great zeal of the C.-in-C.), and to take *his*, which he tendered to me with a tremendous flourish. The Begum, and indeed all four generations of Begums, laughed, as well they might, at the scene, so that the visit went off with more fun and less

stiffness than that to the male knights. Of these the Rajah of Patiala is by far the most interesting—a fine, noble-looking man, quite chivalrous in his aspect, and the one who looked as if he could do a knightly deed, and who behaved admirably as our ally during the Mutinies. The ceremony of investing them with the Order of the Star went off very well, and as Mr. Simpson, the artist, was there, and took a drawing of it, I hope some day to get a copy of it, in which you see a very chivalrous-looking figure of my friend John Murray in full Irregular uniform; and a very unchivalrous one, that of the Legal Member of Council, of whom the artist took a sketch.

From Allahabad I went on by railway to Cawnpore—starting at 12 at night and getting in at 6 in the morning, and there I found the best possible guide to show me over those dreadful scenes of woe and massacre which will ever connect the name of Cawnpore with shame and disaster in English history. Major Mowbray Thompson,<sup>1</sup> a son of the doctor, who first attended you in Middleton St., was one of the only two survivors of that frightful massacre, and pointed out to me the spots where our poor countrymen and women fell, first during the siege, when they were hemmed in on all sides with scarcely any protection from the shot and shell of the surrounding force, and afterwards still more on the river, when they were defenceless and were slaughtered by thousands of wretches who had lain in ambush. The ghat where they all started is a most desolate-looking place, and looked exactly, Major T. said, as it did when the poor ladies crawled over and came down to it, worn out with the fatigue and privations of the siege, and looking with hope to the rest they were to get on the river! The banks are overhung with bushes, behind which two or three thousand men were so effectually hidden that no one of our party expected there was an ambush until the last of them had got into the boats—and the boatmen, who were in league with the enemy, pushed off into shallow water, where they got aground, and then the work of slaughter never ceased until all had been killed and captured save two. The poor ladies who were not then killed were kept with their children until Havelock advanced to retrieve Cawnpore, and then the very day on which he won his victory were slaughtered

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Sir Mowbray Thompson, died at Reading, 1917.



and thrown into a well! A beautiful garden has now been made round the spot where the well was, and a monument is being built over the well itself to their memory. You can imagine what a painful interest there was in looking on these scenes and hearing on the spot tales sometimes of the suffering, sometimes of the wonderful heroism of our poor countrywomen. From Cawnpore I went on to Lucknow. *La suite au prochain.*

Ever, my darlings, your loving, affectionate papa. . . .

### *To his Sisters*

CALCUTTA, December 24, 1861.

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE AND JANE,

We are all delightfully well. Poor Sophy and her baby, with Bessie Irvine, have arrived and are all with us. Sophy is wonderfully cheerful and composed, and has borne up most bravely under her sad trial. She faces with wonderful courage the difficulties she will have to struggle against with her nine children, and, I fear, straitened means, as our dear gallant Richmond was too generous and open-hearted to have saved much. However, happily they are all secured against want: and, with her quiet energy and strength of character, I doubt not that she will, under the provision left her, have sufficient to support them in all comfort. . . .

This has been a dreadful year for loss of friends in India, and I cannot lament that it is drawing to a close. Poor Colonel Baird Smith,<sup>1</sup> who died on the last homeward-bound steamer, was a great friend of mine, and a most delightful as well as talented man. We have been blessed with wonderfully good health on the whole, and my revival from my languor of May and June has been delightful

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Baird Smith, R.E., was a distinguished engineer officer. He had served in the Sikh Wars, and was the Chief Engineer at the siege of Delhi. The illness from which he suffered after the capture of Delhi was renewed by exposure. He was carried on board the *Candia*, and died December 13, 1861. He was buried at Madras, and a memorial tablet in his memory was placed in Calcutta Cathedral. He married a daughter of Thomas de Quincey.

and still continues. I like my new work of all things, and every day rejoice at the change of position.

I am delighted to feel that you all view it so sensibly and had got over the first disappointment as to our coming home.

This is our dear father's birthday. How his kind heart would have rejoiced to hear of my position in Council !



KNEELING FIGURE OF BISHOP HEBER AT THE EAST END OF  
CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL.

Behind it, to the left, is the memorial bust of William Ritchie. Behind the bench is the tablet to  
Theo Ritchie.





## CHAPTER X

1862

### DEATH AND OBITUARY NOTICES

IN the Calcutta Cathedral my father's bust by Foley stands with the inscription below written by Colonel Yule. Near by is the noble, kneeling figure of Bishop Heber.

A MEMORIAL  
OF THE AFFECTION  
OF FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS  
FOR

### WILLIAM RITCHIE

OF THE CALCUTTA BAR AND INNER TEMPLE,  
MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL,  
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY,  
AND TWENTY YEARS RESIDENT IN CALCUTTA.  
TO A CLEAR INTELLECT AND GENEROUS TEMPER  
ENGLAND HAD ADDED HER HIGHEST EDUCATION,  
AND GOD HIS GRACE.

OF A NOBLE AND GENIAL CHARACTER,  
PUBLIC-SPIRITED, WISE AND BELOVED,  
HIS CAREER WAS ONE OF RARE SUCCESS, BREEDING NO ENVY.  
HIS DEATH WAS FELT TO BE A CALAMITY  
ALIKE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE,  
AND CARRIED GRIEF INTO MANY HOUSEHOLDS ;  
BUT LEFT TO ALL WHO KNEW HIM  
THE BRIGHT ASSURANCE OF HIS REST IN CHRIST.  
HE DIED IN CALCUTTA—MARCH 22, 1862,  
IN HIS 46TH YEAR

Close to the bust is a small tablet carved by Effie Ritchie, the wife of his grandson William, to the memory

of our child, Theo, who died at sea in 1896. The church interior is cool, dark and restful from the hot sunshine and noises outside.

LETTERS AND OBITUARY NOTICES, 1862

*From an Indian Paper. The Funeral*

“The high and universal esteem in which Mr. Ritchie was held was manifested in the great assemblage who came together to pay the last tribute of respect at the public funeral. The enormous procession set forth as the first minute-gun was fired. The Governor-General, the Earl of Elgin, all the Government, and the members of the Civil Service were there. The Chief Justice and the Judges, the bar and legal profession ; the Bishop of Calcutta and his clergy, Archdeacon Pratt conducting the service. Sir Robert Napier and all the military staff ; and, as it seemed, every mercantile man in Calcutta stood round the grave. Each sad countenance told of the serious feeling with which all turned from the solemn spot and left all that remained of William Ritchie whilst yet in the prime of his days ; for his coffin bore the record that, though so long and prominently working in India, his age was only forty-five years.”

Mr. Townsend, in the *Spectator*, wrote :

“He was a man of refinement and scholarship ; scrupulously accurate in mind ; modest and retiring in manner ; and possessed of deep religious feeling ; without a particle of assumption or cant. In person a man of great height and bulk, with a countenance of singular sweetness.

“It is not so much as a servant of the State as a member of Society that his loss is so deeply felt. It is not even for his eager and unsurpassed liberality in the support of every useful undertaking, for his thoughtless generosity wherever there was distress and suffering, or for his ever active hospitality to the stranger and the friendless, that his loss is to be deplored. There was something more, and something more difficult to define. His presence unconsciously sweetened the whole social atmosphere in which he lived. It would be but half the truth to say that he never had an enemy. It would be far nearer the truth

to say that no one even saw him without loving him. Great would be the loss of such a spotless life *anywhere*, but especially great in our great Indian metropolis."

*From the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of India on March 26, 1862*

*Present :* Lord Elgin, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, *presiding*. Sir John Peter Grant, Lieut.-Governor of Bengal; Sir Bartle Frere; Major-General Sir Robert Napier; Cecil Beadon; S. Laing; Claud Erskine; David Cowie and others.

The Hon'ble Mr. Beadon, in moving the King of Oudh's Bill, stated that he could not move the passing of the Bill without mentioning that the amendments proposed by the Select Committee were made with the full approval, and, indeed, chiefly at the suggestion of, their lamented and beloved colleague, Mr. Ritchie. It was, he believed, the last work on which Mr. Ritchie was engaged, at any rate it was the last he completed, before he was seized with the fatal malady that hurried him prematurely to the grave. Having been his school-fellow at Eton, and having been intimately associated with him for many years both in private life and public duty, he (Mr. Beadon) might be permitted in that place to express the admiration with which, in common with the whole community, he regarded the many virtues which adorned his character, the esteem in which all held him, and the heart-felt sorrow with which all deplored his loss. It was a loss which, beyond his own family, those only could fully appreciate who had been accustomed to rely upon his sound judgment, his great legal knowledge, his varied and ripe experience, his ready advocacy of every good and useful measure, the clear and comprehensive views he brought to bear on every subject submitted to him, his amiable disposition, and, above all, the truth, honesty, and simplicity of his nature. In that Council, and not less in the Executive Government of India, his absence would long be painfully felt; and it was not too much to say that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for Her Majesty's Government to find a successor in all respects his equal.

*The following is condensed from the Calcutta "Englishman" of March 22*

"William Ritchie is dead ! We write the dreary words again and again, and can scarcely realize their sad truth. All parties will acknowledge that, at this eventful period, almost any man could have been better spared. . . . Last Saturday we heard he was unwell, this morning that all hope was past, and at four o'clock that the kindly heart had ceased to beat ; that the busy brain, teeming with the results of an experience invaluable to the country at this juncture, was at rest ; that the open hand and generous nature which had helped so many in their need were cold for the first time to all appeals. Such consolation as can be afforded to his bereaved family circle by the warm sympathy of a whole community is theirs, for death never struck down one in British India who commanded more entirely the esteem and good feeling of all with whom he came in contact, whether in public or in private life, whether among Europeans or natives, than did William Ritchie."

*From the "Phoenix," March 24, 1862*

". . . It was, however, as the mouthpiece of his fellow-citizens, holding the brief of charity, or of national gratitude, that Mr. Ritchie shone brightest. Accomplished, and as good as accomplished, none on such occasions could enact the role to greater advantage. He pleaded for the widow and orphan, for the starving poor of a nation, or that honour might be given where honour was due, and as the eloquently touching appeal, or brilliant eulogy, streamed forth, his auditors had before them a living illustration of the worth of charity and public-spiritedness. On those occasions the late William Ritchie was truly proud. His commanding figure towered above those around him, and he looked—and his auditors well knew his looks did not belie him—the very impersonation of the good citizen, gifted with ability of a high order, and adorned with virtues of the most sterling character. His name was associated with most we have to be proud of—with, almost without exception, every public charity and charitable subscription ; with every effort to forward educational and social progress ; with, in short, the general



welfare of this country, as, had he lived, it would in all probability have been, with that of Great Britain."

*At a public meeting of the Senate, held on April 2, 1862, the Bishop of Calcutta, George Cotton, ex-headmaster of Marlborough, moved a Resolution in the following terms :*

" . . . And I am sure that never could such tribute be more fitly paid than by the University of Calcutta to its late Vice-Chancellor.<sup>1</sup> I have alluded to his services ■■ presiding in our Senate, but I do not rest his claims to our grateful remembrance upon his appearance on occasions of public debate or formal ceremony. The office of Vice-Chancellor of this University is no merely public or formal dignity, its duties cannot be discharged without much conscientious labour, and a real sacrifice of time and thought. How Mr. Ritchie performed this I can tell this assembly, if it needs to be told, from a somewhat intimate experience. During the last year I have had the honour of sitting with him in the Syndicate, and I can therefore testify to the hearty zeal, the earnest diligence, and thorough knowledge of minute details with which he entered into all our discussions. It would be an exaggeration to attribute to any man a love for a University like ours, which can as yet boast of no time-honoured or ennobling associations, and which has not even a local habitation to give form and visible reality to its name. But if Mr. Ritchie could not feel ■ a love for this University, such as we entertain towards those familiar scenes in which we received our education in youth, or worked in later life, I am quite sure that he at least regarded it with ■ living interest and pleasure and pride, that he looked forward to its future with hope and confidence, and that in the midst of absorbing professional duties, he never shrank from voluntary and hearty labour in its cause. Having accepted a difficult and responsible office, he knew that it was the part of an upright man to make that responsibility a reality. He brought to bear upon it a threefold knowledge, a twenty years' experience of India, ■ knowledge of law in which he had few rivals in this country,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ritchie.

and a knowledge of general English education acquired at the two illustrious Seminaries of Eton and Cambridge. And when, in addition to these recollections of his services, I remind you of that kindness of soul, and originality of manner, which toil and weariness never quenched, which added friendliness to our meetings and warmth to our interest in our duties, I am sure that there is no heart here which will not grieve for his loss, for our weak judgment so premature, and reverence his memory and cherish his example. And this thought of his example leads me to address a few concluding words to you, my friends, the students of this University, who are assembled here to-day to receive from us the honourable distinction of which you have proved yourselves worthy. . . .

“It is good for us, then, to contemplate one example in which these lawful objects are attained, and the perils attending them avoided. Our late Vice-Chancellor was a man who reached a high degree of prosperity and popularity, and yet remained entirely unspoiled. The increase of wealth never chilled his free-hearted benevolence, the regard and applause of his contemporaries never led him to do violence to his conscience for the sake of men’s approbation. Try to imitate him in these things. Try to live for others, for some good end, some object not quite ephemeral, something better than money or self-indulgence, try to bear your part, humble though it may be, in making the millions of your fellow-countrymen happier, wiser, better than they are. He, for whom we are this day sorrowing, desired and laboured that every one of you should be helped, through the education encouraged by this University. . . .”

FINIS

**GERALD RITCHIE'S REMINISCENCES**





## P R E F A C E

THESE reminiscences were penned on the deck of a steamer going from Calcutta to England in 1901. The writer was leaving India for the last time, and the memory of his Indian career was very strongly upon him. They are addressed to his child, Margaret Angela, always known as Peggy. We were taking home a valued old servant, Janet, a devoted nurse to our two children, afflicted with an incurable complaint.

Whatever merit these old scribblings may have arises entirely from the circumstances in which they were written. They have lain in my drawer, practically unread, for nineteen years. Only a single chapter, "Wykehamists," was added during the wonderful St. Luke's summer of last year. Kind reader, forbear to scoff! and forgive my intruding upon you with some domestic details which for a book of reminiscences seem too sacred.

*July 1920.*

55, Oakley Street, S.W.3





PEGGY FEEDING PIGEONS AT DARJEELING.



PEGGY AT DARJEELING.

1901



## CHAPTER I

1853-1862

CALCUTTA AND PARIS

"S.S. 'MALTA,' *February, 1901.*

"MY PEGGY,

When you are grown up, I should like you to know what sort of a life your daddy led. I hope he'll be with you a long time to tell you all about it himself, but whether he will be or not, I want you to have this record to read and to keep.

"Here you are opposite, a delicious little four-year-old girl, absorbed in threading beads with other children on the familiar P. and O. deck. With your great hazel eyes and little head and sweet *mignon* expression, you are a darling of darlings, and, as you like to listen to my interminable story about Fridaline and the Baron, I hope this other story will also be acceptable. We are taking home your faithful Nana very ill, and what I love best of all is to notice your devotion to, and your gentle ways with, her."

I was born in Calcutta on July 26, 1853. We lived in a great house at the corner of the Esplanade, next the present Bank of Bengal, and the house is now occupied by the bank manager. It looks out on the busy river and the shipping and the Eden Gardens. Here my brother Richmond and I lived until we were four and five respectively, when we came to England with our mother in 1858.

During those years my father was in the full tide of his

successful career as Advocate-General of Bengal. Unceasingly busy, he was the most hospitable of men; and many have told me in after-years of his kindness to them when they first came out. I have a recollection of the house with the small portico, the great deep verandah upstairs, darkened by Venetians, and with a great deal of greenery; of entertainments, and the coming and going of men of the Anglo-Indian type that I have known so well since—well set up, genial, busy, practical; and of my father riding his big horse. In those days my father was between thirty-four and thirty-nine. We children all came in pairs, at short intervals, and were sent home to our aunts in Paris at the age when the climate of the plains renders the change to Europe necessary. I remember my mother, with her golden hair, presiding over the house, and lying a good deal on the sofa in the hot days.

In '57 came the Mutiny. Lord Canning, at the head of the Government, had to sit in Calcutta all the year, with the tidings coming in blacker and blacker. Never was a government in such suspense and difficulty, with communications almost entirely cut off, and powerless to direct the operations. The European community of Calcutta behaved badly—was subject to unreasoning fits of panic, abused the Governor-General and howled for indiscriminate retaliation. My father was a friend of Lord Canning and Sir John Peter Grant. But, though it looked at one time as though the English would be driven into the sea, business went on as usual. My father took a leading part in the enrolment of the Calcutta Mounted Volunteers, and was conspicuous with his tall stature on a great horse in the drilling on the Maidān.

I have a vivid recollection of a great dinner in the Town Hall given to the Naval Brigade under the heroic young Sir William Peel. My father spoke, and Richmond and I were taken to see the proceedings. We accompanied the sailors as they marched back along the Strand to the *Shannon*, lying in the river. They told the syces to clear out, and



GERALD RITCHIE AND RICHMOND RITCHIE DURING THE MUTINY IN  
VOLUNTEER UNIFORMS ASKING A DISARMED SEPOY AT BARRACKPORE  
WHERE HIS GUN WAS.





we marched among them on our ponies. I remember well the look of the jolly, bearded blue-jackets, jovial after their dinner, clustering round and making much of us in the early night under the stars, and the look of the *Shannon* when we reached it.

Calcutta is the city of statues. Viceroys in frock-coats, Viceroys in uniform, with bare heads under the pitiless sun, stretching out arms indicative of their statesmanlike moderation, or reining in their steeds, are dotted about the Maidān. But the statue I like best is the marble one of Sir William Peel in his naval uniform, near the Eden Gardens, looking out on the ships. He must have been a charming man.

Richmond and I had little volunteer uniforms—helmet with red pagri, dark blue serge tunic, with black shoulder-straps, white breeches and top boots. William Taylor painted a picture of us going up to a gigantic sepoy at Barrackpore and asking him where his gun was : “Tumhārā banduk kahan hai ?” The sepoys had been disarmed.

We used to go a good deal to Barrackpore, with its beautifully wooded park, and to Ishapore close by. There we used to stay in a pretty, lofty, verandahed house on the river front, among many casuarina trees—the wind making a well-remembered melancholy rustle in their branches. When I returned to India, seventeen years afterwards, the river, the short twilight, the lights of the carriages, and the great circle of houses round the Maidān showing out after sunset came back to me vividly. I realised, too, how much my father was respected and beloved by all classes of Europeans and Indians. His powerful advocacy was long remembered. In 1861 he was appointed Legal Member of Council. The relief in the change of work and the release from trying days in Court were very great to him. But he occupied his high appointment only a few months, and died in March, 1861, of internal inflammation after a few days’ illness. His early death caused a profound sensation. It occurred just after Lord Elgin’s succession to the Viceroyalty.

My father occupied a unique position in Calcutta. I wish I remembered his personality better. After we had gone home he came to England once only, and we were all assembled with him at Brighton, where he used to take us long walks. He had a bright, radiant nature, of extraordinary goodness and benevolence.

I love the corner of the Calcutta Cathedral where his bust stands. Close by is the noble, kneeling figure of Heber, his head bowed humbly, the head of a young, thoughtful man, with curly hair. Opposite your grandfather's bust is the medallion of Sir Henry Lawrence's spare, worn face, "who taught how kindly subject races should be ruled, who first in India founded hill-stations for British soldiers' children." Around are monuments to many soldiers and civilians who have died in the service of India.

The inscription on my father's bust was written by Colonel Yule. It is a very true inscription. Throughout his Eton and Cambridge career my father attracted friends of the best sort. His cousin, W. M. Thackeray, his elder by six years, liked him very much. He had much humour and fun, and was full of geniality. His religious sense was very deep. He was just everything to his family—his charming Thackeray mother and his sisters Charlotte and Jane. He toiled for them and his children all his life in the trying Calcutta climate, and was happy and blessed in his life's work. Therefore, treasure up the memory of your grandfather, my Peggy. His grave is in the Circular Road Cemetery, where there is little shade, and the sun beats down unsparingly.

I am always so sorry for the poor little white-faced children in Calcutta. There was no going to the hills in those days, and cultivating the sort of red cheeks which you have now got, thanks to spending your three Indian summers in Darjeeling. Nowadays it is extraordinary to think that my parents *never* got any change in India from that indescribably debilitating climate.

In March, 1859, my mother took Richmond and myself

home. I don't remember much about the journey from Calcutta to Marseilles, any more than you will remember the present one. But, from experience on several voyages with my children, I know that I had a perfectly delightful time—racing up and down the deck with little companions, watching the fascinating ship arrangements, putting into new ports, and generally having a time of high excitement and novelty.

But I do remember the desert route from Suez to Cairo—the caravan of camel carriages at night, our turning out in the darkness and seeing the desert and bright stars and breathing the cold desert air. The next act of my humble life-drama comes back to me vividly—the arrival at Paris and meeting with my aunts and brother and sisters. We reached the Gare de Lyon by lamplight and I thought that the station building was my new home. But we rumbled over the cobble-stones in a *fiacre* for a weary long while to 36 Rue Godot de Mauroi, and went up three flights of stairs, I hanging on to my mother's dress, and at the third *étage* a door opened and displayed the dear, cheerful, little fire-lit *appartement*. I think I saw Félicie, the general factotum's broad, jolly face beaming first. There was Aunt Charlotte and Aunt Jane, and Gussie and Blanche, eleven and ten, Willie and Pinkie, eight and seven. Richmond<sup>1</sup> said, in a very grave, deep voice, "I can hop three times round the room," and made them laugh very much. I remember the look of the *salle à manger* with the supper set, and the stove in the corner of the room. And so the pleasant Paris life with their aunts was started for the little Indians, which was to last till I was nine.

Peggy, you will read the memoir of that angel, our Aunt Charlotte, the bravest, most generous, humblest and most loving of women—a saint upon earth. What do we not

<sup>1</sup> My younger brother Richmond entered the English Civil Service and became Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India. I shall have frequent occasion to mention him, the best of brothers. He died in 1913. He married Annie Thackeray, the eldest daughter of the novelist, in 1877.

owe to her ! My sister-in-law, Lady Ritchie, very suitably dedicated her book, *Toilers and Spinsters*, to Charlotte Ritchie in Paris, the friend and helper of many toilers and many spinsters.

The *appartement* was a delightful home. There was the night nursery, with the alcove, where we slept ; and the hanging shelf of children's books, and the toy cupboard, with cuirasses and helmets from Giroux's, and the properties for acting. Our great play was one about Leonora and her betrothed going to the war. Richmond and I were alternately the squire who came in on bended knee and said, " My liege, the army's waiting ! "

The kitchen, with its rows of burnished pans and hot fire, was presided over by fat, wheezy old Annette—a sort of Rembrandt domestic. We had delicious meals—the mashed potatoes, vermicelli soup, *chocolat à la crème* I liked best. The *salle à manger* was also used for a school-room, and we did our lessons under Miss Burnett and Mademoiselle Ida. Miss Burnett was Scotch, with a plump and very shiny face. Mademoiselle Ida was not such a homely person—drawn and anxious-looking, with a high, shrill voice, very German. The *salon* had red velvet covered chairs, with brass nails, and snug wood fires and old ornaments, including some clay *bhistees* and *kitmagars* and custard apples, a clock with gilt ornamentation under a glass, and brass candelabra. *Le docteur* Bertin, our medical attendant, used to sit in the arm-chair when he came to dine and gave us lumps of sugar from the bottom of his cup, known as *canards*. I remember Mlle Dacquain coming to dine, a lady with a long face, not beautiful, afterwards celebrated as Mérimée's *inconnue*. Aunt Jane used to play the piano beautifully, and some of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn music which she played still conjures back the alcove where we used to lie listening to it after we had gone to bed.

We were a very happy, united family. We were all in different stages at M. Rémy's *cours*, for which there was incessant work and preparation. The *Présidences* were



much coveted, especially the lovely one *d'honneur*, covered with gilt flourishes. We did an enormous amount of *histoire sainte*. French history we learnt from an illustrated book, with little pictures studded round the important ones showing the inventions of the reigns. We sat at a long baize table at the *cours*, and M. Rémy threw us *jetons* when we answered right. We stuck a good deal to the early dawn of French history, Pharamond, Mérovée, Clovis, Chilpéric, Pépin le Bref. I always like the early dawn of histories—it is simple and vague.

We used to be taken long walks to the Champs Élysées, the Arc de Triomphe and the Tuileries. It is no great distance from the Rue Godot de Mauroi to the Arc de Triomphe, but it still seems to me ~~as~~ long and fatiguing as it did when I was a little boy. We enjoyed our games in the Tuileries, among the chestnut-trees and the statues of Laocoon and other classical subjects. They were good to hide behind. We used to tear along the shady terraces and down the steps. The spring, with the fresh green of the chestnut-trees, was the best time. The exciting Boulevard des Italiens, the Rue de Rivoli, the Boulevard de la Madeleine, the Parc Monceau—in those days a wild waste—the Rue de la Paix bounded our usual daily peregrinations. It was impossible, even for small boys, not to feel the genius of the place in the sumptuousness of the great capital with its Place de la Concorde facing the avenue to the great triumphal arch, the bridges and the quays, the fountains and the broad boulevards. We were thorough little Parisians, and delighted in Paris. How delightful was the Place de la Madeleine, with its flower-market, the tulips in fresh white paper, the old ladies presiding over the stalls! Occasionally, on birthdays, we went to the *petits théâtres* in the Champs Élysées—the Temptation of St. Anthony was our favourite drama. How fascinating was the little scene, with the church and St. Antoine saying his prayers, and the devil dances which interrupted him with hoarse songs, and all the marionnettes ~~as~~ they were whisked to and fro! The entertainment would probably wind up

with *gauffres*—hot and well powdered with sugar from their Procrustean iron beds.

Occasionally we were taken to the Louvre—a particularly knee-and-neck-aching expedition. The early rooms, such as the one containing the marble table with the seasons and the iron rail round it, were all right, but after that the progress was slower and slower to the Salon Carré.

Excluding a very shadowy *Chevalier d'Assas*, where I think we must have had very bad seats, twice only were we taken to the play. One piece was *Le pied de Mouton*, a fairy drama. The *pied* had magic properties; there was a charming young man and his love, and a delicious buffoon called Nigodinos, who, in the last act, confesses that he has eaten *le pied de mouton*—"je l'ai mangé avec de la moutarde."

The other piece was *La bataille de Marengo*, a first-rate Napoleonic drama. Napoleon at school in the first act was personated by a young lady—one saw at once the great man in the concentrated youth poring over his book, and addressing his comrades with a marked tone of authority. Afterwards, Napoleon determining to cross the Alps, and the *grande Armée* defiling over the precipices was splendid—how many times must they have come round in different uniforms! There was a most affecting under-plot of a gay lieutenant, and an old rugged sergeant who, unbeknown to his son, is the lieutenant's father. The lieutenant insults and strikes his father in the snow, just after the tail of the *grande Armée* has finally disappeared, and the father's manly breast heaves up and down like the sea till he gets out, "Mon fils!" There was a lady who rushed in in every act, but I cannot remember how she came into the plot, beyond her being the lieutenant's mamma.

*Mardi gras* was a great day, and we used to be taken to a window to see the procession pass. I also remember a procession of veteran soldiers in the Rue de Rivoli, and I think some had old Napoleonic uniforms. The Hippo-

drome in the Champs Élysées was a great treat, with Robert Macaire effecting changes on horseback.

Napoleon III, Eugénie and *le petit Prince* (in whom we took the greatest interest), reigned at the Tuileries, and they were red-letter days in our walks abroad when they drove past. Little did we reck that Napoleon's was not the best-established throne in the world. At St. Cloud we saw the Prince's toy railway, and the lake where the Emperor used to skate.

In the summer we had a change into the country. The first was to St. Germain, and we used to play in the forest on the terrace. I remember the great spring fair there, the triumphant musical whirli-go-rounds, the stalls for cakes and children's flutes with twisted coloured paper. Another year we went to Trouville. We saw the big comet as we changed carriages at night. We enjoyed digging in the sands and hunting for *équilles* at low tide. Sometimes we had fights with the French boys, flicking up sand with our spades. And we always got the worst of it, being outnumbered, like Moore at Corunna. Once I got slightly damaged, and I remember Félicie boldly taking me off to a smart turreted house on the sands to have it out with my assailant Camille's people. Camille was having a hearty *déjeuner* with his napkin across his breast, and was not much affected by Félicie going for him in really hot indignation.

On Sundays we went to the Rue d'Aguesseau, and were impressed by the thoughtful and somewhat stern Mr. Forbes. Mr. Sergeant, his curate, we liked, and he was very kind to us. I remember his broad mouth always expanded into a beaming and benevolent smile as he said, "Oh, the joys of an English home, home blessings, home prayers and home loving," in his strident, woolly voice. The young Forbes, of the Indian Civil, I have seen a good deal of in India. Madame Mohl, the wife of the Persian savant, an old friend of Madame Récamier, who had a *salon*, we were taken to see occasionally—a wonderful lively old lady with a wrinkled face and a turban. Anglo-

Indian friends of my parents occasionally passed through, such as Captain Shakespear, with his tiger-claw necklace, and his tiger stories.

I paid a visit to Sir James Outram, very bad with asthma, at his hotel in the Rue de Rivoli. He presented me with a *Bowdler's Family Shakespeare*, and wrote my name in it, as my godfather. He was going home, broken by the Mutiny in which he played such a great part, and died soon after.

In the spring of 1862 came the news of my father's death. Well do I remember Aunt Charlotte, with her head bowed with grief, sitting among us, and the profound hush of the great sorrow in the *appartement*. A little after, a tall, silvery-haired man walked into the room where we were playing with our sister Nelly, who had come from India not long before. "Nelly," he said, "that rhymes with jelly." It was Wm. Thackeray, who had hastened over at once to comfort the aunts. "Well, Charlotte," I have heard that his first words were, "William is now a member of the Council of Heaven."

Richmond and I wore black blouses and belts, chicken-work drawers, bare legs and *casquettes*. Do you remember the story of the prickly gaiters which I used to tell you when you didn't like wearing something? We used to tell each other interminable stories as we walked along together, and sat of an evening at the rail of the window overlooking the quiet street. From it we used to watch some humble shops, and the comings and goings—the *charbonnier* always suggested the charcoal-burners in Grimm's stories. A prominent figure in the courtyard was the *concierge* in his cap. He had a sort of St. Vitus's dance, which made his long legs quiver as he walked.

In the summer of 1862 we migrated with our mother to the Château Neuf at Boulogne. The rooms were much bigger than anything we had seen, and the atmosphere of our life was altered. There was a regatta and aquatic sports—races and a greased pole—one day. I seem to remember Captain and Mrs. Brown, and the latter singing



“The Mocking Bird” beautifully. I also have a vivid recollection of tasting delicious sherry and seltzer there one hot day. Reconstruct your daddy’s youth, my Peg, from these valuable observations. You are such fun when you insist on a sip from my wine-glass, and declare that you like it, that I want to know if memories of food cling to you.

## CHAPTER II

1862-66

### WHITNASH RECTORY, WARWICKSHIRE

IN October, 1862, when I was nine, I found myself on the Boulogne packet bound for England and school for the first time. My eldest brother had been at Whitnash for some time, and was to take me back with him. It was a moonlight night, with white fleecy clouds scudding along, and I rejoiced in going forth into the world and to the school of which we had heard so much.

But everything was damped by the horrors of sea-sickness, from which I didn't recover till we were high up the Thames. We went up to London Bridge, and I was lost in wonder at the shipping and the wharves as we slipped along. Then came the roar of the streets and the homely English language spoken by everybody, and the view of the dome of St. Paul's.

Whitnash Rectory (you and I and your mother made a pilgrimage there in 1907) is close to Leamington in the middle of Warwickshire—of Shakespeare's country, though we never thought of it at the time. Later Joseph Arch was to stir up an agricultural revolt in this district, but nothing of this came into one's ken. It is a rich, flat, agricultural country, with fine elms and old timbered cottages. The Rector, the Rev. James Reynolds Young, had a family of eight, and found it convenient to keep a private school of about twelve boys in the commodious Rectory, and, with the help of two assistants, combined

school and parish work. He was a Charterhouse and Cambridge man, and had succeeded in forming a very good connection with some of the peerage and well-to-do people. Personally he was genial and kindly, and took great interest in us. He always said he never had such a boy as my eldest brother, even among his budding peers. We were taught the usual preparatory course for a public school—with lots of nonsense verses. The Rectory was a pretty, creeper-grown, rambling building in the middle of the picturesque old village, with its timber-fronted houses and pretty cottages, and it adjoined the Church and churchyard. The glebe house was a sort of lodge near the entrance gate, and was very comfortable.

After ■ term, Richmond also came, and my eldest brother conducted us both to school. We stayed the night at Palace Gardens, where Mr. Thackeray lived with his daughters Annie and Minnie. I remember our driving up, and our kind reception at the big house. Mr. Thackeray was immensely amused at Richmond having *The Great Hoggarty Diamond* as his travelling-book, and at his saying he liked it. Then he asked me to take a book out of his shelf in his study out of which a brass knob was growing, and then we were sent off in the carriage to Madame Tussaud's.

Mr. Young spent a good deal of time in a greasy black clerical dressing-gown, feeding his chickens. Poultry rearing was one of his many fads. Mrs. Young presided in a masterly way over the internal economy and her own large family. On Sundays it was the custom for all the boys to come to late dinner in dress clothes, Eton jackets, open white waistcoats, and Eton collars. When the cloth was cleared, cowslip wine was set on the shining mahogany, which we enjoyed thoroughly, and then we adjourned to the drawing-room for a reading, or for a walk in the summer.

There was, of course, ■ good deal of church-going. The boys sat in the chancel, and the choir was made up of some Sunday-washed farmers in shiny black. Periodically

■ particularly fat and wizened old gentleman had a solo in the hymn,

“ In the solemn midnight hour,  
When the evil one hath power,”

which we thought very weird and beautiful. Periodically also after second lesson in open church, there would be a public performance by the boys in answering questions propounded by old Young in his most dulcet accents on Christian doctrine. It was all rehearsed beforehand, and must have been very edifying to the Leamington visitors. This was the sort of thing :

*The Rev. James :* We have seen how St. James, in his Epistle, speaks of Grace being the sure means of Redemption. Can you quote any other text—*Gerald*—to illustrate this ?

*Gerald :* Yes, sir. In Colossians, iii, vi, we read that ‘ the whole creation groaneth and travaileth,’ etc. etc.”

Sometimes Gerald would have a fit of giggles, or have forgotten his text, when Ralph would be appealed to, and there would be “ ructions ” afterwards. I must mention that Mr. Young believed in the cane.

On Sunday there was ■ nice institution of each boy visiting an old woman in the village, taking her a pudding, and reading to her a chapter of the Bible. I think the old widows enjoyed the visits from the young gentlemen, though youth and crabbed age didn’t go very well together, and I am afraid they did not find us very sympathetic about their aches and rheumatism. Sometimes Mr. Young would take us to the comfortable farmers’ parlours, when we would have a sip of the delicious cowslip. There were Sunday walks about the country, and looking at ricks and manure-yards.

The recitations before breaking up for Christmas were an important event, for which we prepared carefully, and printed the pieces ourselves at a small school press. The Leamington ladies came in, and we put on our white waistcoats and spouted French, German, Latin, Greek and



English. One time I had a long poem about the Queen's visit of condolence to Blair Athol, and its noble chieftain, the Duke :

“ Let Athol's hills the story tell,  
And every Highland scene,  
The goodness and the Majesty  
Of England's gracious Queen.”

The audience understood that there was a close connection between this visit and Whitnash, the connecting link being a jolly little red-haired boy, who was a nephew of the Duke of Athol. Another of my speeches was Mirabeau's “ Discours sur la Banqueroute ” in the Constituent Assembly. I didn't understand at all why he thought “ la banqueroute ” of his country so terrible.

We went to a dancing-class at Leamington, which was a hateful way of spending the afternoon. The boys all usually came from rich, comfortable homes, and were going on to Eton. Carlo Bayley, now of the I.C.S., and an ex-Lieutenant-Governor, I remember telling me what an Indian civilian was. I excited much amusement one day at dinner by saying, when I was asked what I was thinking of, “ I was thinking what they were doing in Greenland at this moment.” I was christened “ Shadowy, dreamy Geraldine,” and deserved my name.

In July, 1863, Richmond being eight and I just ten, we went up for college at Eton under the care of a master, Mr. Nixon, whom we have well known since at King's, Cambridge. We stayed with the Rev. St. John Thackeray, our cousin, then an Eton master, and were immensely impressed with the Eton surroundings—the Castle, Layton's, where Nixon treated us to ices, the College, and my eldest brother's room at “ Swage's ”—and, far the most important of all, the Eton boys, the magnificent swells in tail coats and white ties, while the others looked to us like sturdy men of the world.

On leaving Paris our home was at Upper Henbury, near Wimborne in Dorsetshire, where my mother pitched her tent in the middle of a conservative county society, an

atmosphere totally different from what we had been accustomed to. Richmond got into Eton College, and I returned to Whitnash, feeling very dull and envious, and plodded on there for four years altogether, till I was thirteen, when I went to Winchester. I had a try for a Harrow scholarship, where Mrs. Butler was kind to me, and there was some talk of Rugby. The Rev. James took me there to see a master. We passed through London, and stayed at the Clerical Hotel, where there were home comforts and prayers were read before breakfast.



HARRY MOBERLY, PREFECT OF HALL.





## CHAPTER III

1866-72

### WINCHESTER

I WILL now proceed to give some reminiscences of my Winchester days.

The College was founded by William of Wykeham five hundred years ago, and the traditions of the founder and his times have been handed down—something of the modest Chaucerian scholar, or clerkë, and of unaffected piety. A golden mediocrity was the mark of the school (as one of its distinguished men put it, the first Lord Selborne). The *genius loci* discouraged the boy who was disposed to make a splash, to be *outré*. There was none of the Eton brilliancy. Winchester turned out a succession of hard-working parsons, dons, lawyers, etc., who sent *their* sons to the old school in their turn.

The delightful picture is of Harry Moberly, as Prefect of Hall. He seems to me a typical Wykehamist, disliking all display, and enjoying life to its utmost. After leaving Winchester he went up to New College, Oxford, and played three years for the 'Varsity. While at Winchester he delighted in drawing, and made good pencil copies from the pictures at the Louvre. After working at Oxford as tutor, he came to Winchester at the age of thirty-five, and started a master's house. For twenty years he was a widely respected house master. He went on to St. Michael's, Winchester, as Rector, and bought the beauti-

ful house, St. Michael's Lodge, sloping towards the Itchin. He died at the age of eighty-four, and his latest photographs show the old man just the developed Prefect of Hall. He had joyously attained the topmost rung of the ladder, and was ready to spring off with a smile. The reflection of his goodness and benevolence reigns still at St. Michael's Lodge, where man and beast are ever welcome. After all my wanderings there is no place in England to which I feel greater attachment, or which has for me a more quiet charm—renewed for me at long intervals—than Winchester.

The inscription on the Crimean Memorial, at the west end of the chapel porch, has appealed to me all my life :

THIS PORCH  
HAS BEEN PREPARED AND  
BEAUTIFIED BY  
WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM'S  
SONS  
AS A SACRED SHRINE  
IN WHICH THE MEMORIES OF  
THEIR THIRTEEN BRETHREN  
WHO DIED  
IN THE WAR OF THE CRIMEA,  
A.D. 1854-55,  
MAY BE PRESERVED FOR AN  
EXAMPLE TO FUTURE  
GENERATIONS.

Think upon them, thou who art passing by to-day ;  
Child of the same family, bought by the same Lord ;  
Keep thy foot when thou goest into this House of God ;  
There watch thine armour, and make thyself ready by prayer,  
To fight and to die,  
The faithful soldier and servant of Christ and of thy country.

---

HE IS NOT A GOD OF THE DEAD, BUT OF THE LIVING, FOR  
ALL LIVE UNTO HIM.

---

I love the white college tower with its chimes, rising up square from the greenery in the valley ; the quadrangles, meads and its old wall ; the long grey mass of the Cathedral, its beautiful long nave, and the turf and limes, the rooks cawing, the quaint old houses in the Close, the clear chalk stream of the Itchin and the water-meadows, the back-ground of bare chalk downs, the High Street and Buttercross and arcaded Piazza—all these things are associated in my mind with delightful memories of spring, summer, autumn and winter.

Du Boulay was my house master, and I always had pleasant relations with him. He was a bright, alert little man, with a handsome, clear-cut face, close-cropped, curly black hair, an olive tint, southern looking. His smile and laugh were pleasant. He prided himself on his Huguenot accent, and talked very distinctly. He was little of the cleric, and much more of the man of the world, dressed well, and was a social light. He had no pretension to be much of a scholar, and had got on by being a thoroughly good fellow.

I think I have never seen a more gracious lady than Mrs. Du Boulay, and she was as good as she was gracious. She was a perfect mother to her enormous family of thirteen. The sons were sent out all over the world ; they included a gunner, distinguished in his profession, a doctor, a missionary (who died in Africa), an Indian civilian, a parson and an Egyptian official. They formed one of those great English families which have given England its foremost place in the world.

On the night of my first coming there was a performance of *Hamlet* by the boys, headed by the stage-struck master, the Rev. C. H. Hawkins, *alias* the "Chalker," who enacted the thoughtful prince in ringlets. It was in the old Commoner Hall. There was a large audience, and the boys sat on the high desks ("toys") all round swinging their legs and sang "Dulce Domum" at the end.

I read for a long time in the Shakespeare Society, over

which Mr. Hawkins presided, and got a pretty good knowledge of Shakespeare thereby.

Dr. Moberly was Head Master when I went, to be shortly translated to the Bishopric of Salisbury after thirty years' incumbency of Winchester. He was a superb, handsome old dominie. I can see him now, sailing along in cap and gown like a frigate—and a big boy in flannels, fresh from the five-court, where he ought not to have been, making himself small behind a door through which the Doctor is passing.

His last sermon was very affecting. He was recalling the careers of the many over whom he had presided. And then he was evidently struck by the case of old favourites who had failed badly in life's handicap. The thought was too much for him. He stopped short and sobbed.

Summer and winter we had to be in the school as the clock struck seven—necessitating a very hard run for the long quarter of a mile that separated the school from the house. Chapel was at 7.30; breakfast between 8 and 9; 9 to 12, school. While I was in Dr. Fearon's division he and I always had a hard race as to which should be first in his class-room. Losing for me meant, outside the lack of honour and glory, one hundred lines imposition. We were always the last two to get down. Fearon allowed two and a half minutes, while I managed with two minutes only. At St. Michael's passage he would be one hundred yards ahead, and going strong. At Oxford he had been renowned for his nimble dancing. Things looked black, but I nearly always beat him by a yard at the class-room door. He was very rightly annoyed at the result of this race, in which he was so frequently worsted. When he had the joy of triumph, he would say, "Oo! but one ought not to be tardy. Oo! but I have noticed that you always are tardy. Ritchie, a hundred lines." From 12 to 1.30 we had recreation; dinner 1.30; school, 3 to 6; 7 to 9 or 10 preparation, and bed, and were sleepy at bedtime. Tuesdays and Thursdays were half-holidays. There was chapel on Saturday evening, with chapel black



in the darkness, lit only by guttering candles. The light was always very subdued through the deeply stained windows. We had beautiful anthems and excellent sermons, and I love the chapel associations. On Sundays we marched in long procession to the Cathedral, and sat under the altar in the choir, clambering—in imagination—about the wood-work of the Bishop's throne, and among the bosses on the roof with Bishop Fox's pelican.

I enjoyed games, football, fives, paper-chases. I relished the long country walks and runs with companions, to Hursley, and distant downs, as much as one could do in three hours. One Easter holiday, I set out on the first day with a *socius* to walk to Oxford—fifty miles. We had to stop at Abingdon, forty-six miles, footsore, but greatly pleased with ourselves.

In the summer, long rambles, with a bathe at the end in one of the old wooden locks in the clear Itchin, were a great delight. "First spot," an old-fashioned, narrow, timber lock, was the bathing scene in the evening. The bold thing to do was to climb up the side of the shed of the sawing factory, stand for a moment on the top of the pent-roof, and then come pattering down the steep roof, getting faster and faster before the big "purl" into the lock. It had to be a real far-spread "purl" to avoid the stakes let into the lock in front of the factory. Some boys would make the moment still more glorious by continuing the dive under the sluice-gates of the lock, which had been unloosed. After these bathes, new potatoes with salt and pepper tasted A 1.

The only sport I was successful at was rifle-shooting. For three years I shot in the school eleven at Wimbledon. The first year we were a great failure and came back with our tails between our legs, having been last in the order for the shield. But we took the lesson to heart, and in my last year we won the Ashburton Shield, and in the two following years also. The high Pegg down, where we used to practise shooting, the bugle-calls ringing across the valley, the long march or double back in the twilight on

summer evenings, our meeting on neutral ground with Marlborough, and the annual outing to Wimbledon, bring pleasant recollections. Rifle-shooting was not thought much of, but it was the only sport in which I was proficient.

Yesterday, my Peg, we reached Colombo. Before turning into the harbour, we ran for a long time by the wooded coast and saw clearly the Mount Lavinia Hotel, with its lawns coming down to the sea. You learnt my nonsense rhyme :

From the knolls where Mount Lavinia stands  
You gaze on the Indian Ocean,  
And there comes on your ears from the yellow sands  
The surf's never-ending commotion.

Catamaran, catamaran !  
Would that I were a fisherman,  
To sail all day on the blue-green bay,  
By pleasant Mount Lavinia !

For then I would wear an old hat of straw,  
And run out my boat in the morning,  
When the crows are beginning their early caw,  
And the hidden reef I'd go scorning.

And the West Monsoon would fill my sail,  
And send me merrily dancing,  
And I'd let it blow ■ cyclone or gale  
And still o'er the billows go prancing.

Oh ! the cocoa-nut palms are tall and bright,  
And nod to one kindly greeting,  
As one blithely speeds on his homeward flight  
When the afternoon shadows ■■ fleeing.

Catamaran, catamaran !  
Would that I were a fisherman,  
To sail all day on the blue-green bay,  
By pleasant Mount Lavinia !

And then we took you for a jaunt. We went to the tea-house near the jetty, and there you sat with your legs dangling from a high chair, enjoying yourself immensely, hot as you were. "Look, Mummy, there's a man with ■ comb in his hair !" Then we had a drive along the sea-face, with the surf setting in over the sands, and the

fantastic, supple palms fringing the end of the coast drive. All the world was taking the evening air—bluejackets in rickshaws, travellers to India, Australia, China and the Straits, changing steamers or stopping at this point of call. You played on the sands and got your legs soaked in a wave, and then we went back to the ship and watched the flashing light together till you were put to bed on deck. What a fairy scene is that Colombo harbour at night!—with the town and the sea-face marked out by lines of light and the pretty green and red lights at harbour limits, and all the liners lit up.

Let us hark back from the soft, languid breezes of Ceylon to the Hampshire bracing air.

At the end of 1866 Dr. Moberly was succeeded by Dr. Ridding, honest, direct. Ridding had one of the handsomest heads conceivable. To me he always suggested a great English bishop-statesman of olden times. He set himself to alter and reform the school with a truly Gladstonian zeal. "Commoners" was abolished, the scene of much rowdiness and sometimes of much that was bad, and the boys were distributed among four new tutors' houses, which were built. The buildings so made available were turned into much-needed class-rooms.

Everyone has heard of Wykehamical "notions." Notions are an *argot* of slang words that have been adopted as particularly appropriate by past generations. At the same time, though we knew it not, we were talking very pure old English in our notions. Wrench, a master, has published an entertaining dictionary of notions, giving the derivation of each word, with instances from old authors. A new boy was sent to fetch his "pempy." It was only after he had been to see three or four boys in different places that he realised he was being made a fool of. No "pempy" existed for him except the phrase *πέμπε μωρόν πρότερον*, or, "Send the fool farther." It was "spree to sport a line of three," i.e. it was uppish to walk three in a row. When your family came to see you, they were your "pitch-up." A bigger boy would "teejy" you at first, i.e. look after

you, derived from Fr. *protéger*. "Bangy Bags," or brown trousers, were also "spree" to wear.

A former master, Mr. Dicken, took pleasure in keeping up his driving. One day he was driving his dog-cart slowly down College Street when a small boy took off his cap to him. Mr. Dicken, much pleased, stopped and asked the small boy why he had capped him. "Because," said Brown minimus, "you are a notion." Dicken had become "Daker" in the notions book.

I can conceive nothing more glorious than to become a *notion*. Of course, such luck is impossible to an outsider. Mr. Wrench gives a useful hint that there is a tendency to pluralise words, such as "Hills," "Meads," and to omit the definite articles before titles and familiar names, such as "Prefect of Hall," "School," "House." I see that I have unconsciously fallen into the old practice.

When I went, there would be two hundred boys collected in "School," four forms being taken by capped and gowned masters on the benches at the ends, and the rest sitting about at the "slobs" doing preparation nominally, and under that guise fighting, kicking each other's shins, chatting, while the prefects walked up and down, "cutting" into offenders with their ground-ash sticks when the fun became particularly fast and furious. At the end of school, and after prayers, boys who had had their names "ordered" were publicly flogged. The victim knelt down, while the small of his back was bared by two presiding prefects, the Bible-clerk and ostiarius. The head master, with his cap on, looking awful, called out, "Bible-clerk and ostiarius!" and, seizing a long rod, with apple-tree switches attached, proceeded to lay it on. It was a point of honour for the victim not to flinch a hair's breadth during the performance, and most critical were the audience. Then the Head, flinging his rod with a great clatter on the floor, marched out, and the flagellee's friends clustered round him as he tucked in his shirt and presented a grinning face, very different from the one which he had been recently wearing during school time



in anticipation of the *supplice*. I underwent it once, and remember feeling proud when a connoisseur said, approvingly, "You were all right, Ritchie; you didn't flinch."

The same dark, oak-panelled Queen Anne building of Sir Christopher Wren's was the scene of more questionable punishments. Prefects (head boys) had the power of inflicting corporal punishment on boys for an undefined range of offences—infringing regulations, smoking, going out of bounds, and even for impertinence. The word would run round that Brown and Jones would be "tunded" after evening school, and everybody became alert as the population of a Spanish town at the thought of a bull-fight. After school was over, prayers read, and the masters had sailed out, the boys formed a great ring, clustering on benches and tables to get a good view. A knot of prefects stood in the middle: the operator, pale and determined, selecting the toughest and most springy ground-ash out of a large bunch, would stand out at the same time with the delinquent Brown, looking dogged. The executioner would measure the distance, Brown would turn up the collar of his coat. He would then lay on a dozen strokes on to Brown's shoulders with the full force of his arm—slowly and deliberately, somebody counting the strokes aloud. Then another victim, Jones, would step out and be treated in the same manner, and everybody would rush off to tea, discussing the "tunding" at length, appraising its severity and the fortitude with which it was borne. "Tundings" were not frequent in ordinary times, and the "tundees" were generally strong louts in the lower forms of the type of Flashman in *Tom Brown*. But occasionally prefects entertained a perverted sense of their duties and abused their powers. There was always something cold-blooded and brutal about a tunding—a boy having to submit to such severe pain from another little older than himself. I have seen a prefect behave like a fiend, aiming his blows so as to fall on the boy's bare neck and face, because he thought that his coat was padded. The same prefect once thought fit to tund a

large proportion of the school—nearly a hundred boys, I think—for neglecting a rule that was beginning to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance, the rule of walking to Hills, two and two, on a half-holiday. He was held in execration like a sort of Domitian, but it would have required a boy with a spirit of Luther to have stood out against the system. This too zealous administrator afterwards joined the Colonial Civil Service. I have no doubt that he quickly learnt wisdom and heartily regretted his boyish zeal. I suffered myself from prefectorial injustice and assure you, my Peg, that when I became a prefect I was a very mild and humane one. There was a scandal in 1872. Willie Macpherson, of the Bengal Civil Service, was the tundee. After that the tunding system was shown up and reformed.

These things, however, did not seriously affect our happiness.

I became regenerate at about sixteen, and did sober, steady work, though I never became in the least good as a scholar. I worked up to the top of the second form in the school. Fearon was the most stimulating master whom I came under. He gave me a taste for history and general literature. So did Du Boulay, with whom I used to sit up, reading French classics, till we both nodded with slumber. I read *Sartor Resartus*, which had a great influence upon me—it opened my eyes to the realities of the world and religion. Carlyle's sad, solemn tones have always appealed to me very strongly.



GROUP OF DONS AT WINCHESTER, 1864.  
*Back line (standing).—*Rev. H. C. Dickinson, W. L. Stonhouse, E. A. L. Willes, Rev. Geo. Ridding, Rev. Harry Moberly, C. Griffith.  
*Front line (sitting).—*Rev. C. H. Hawkins, John Des. Walford, Dr. Moberly, Rev. J. T. H. Du Boulay.





## CHAPTER IV

### WYKEHAMISTS

1861-72

ST. MICHAEL'S LODGE, WINCHESTER  
October, 1919.

PEGGY ! nineteen years of London life have gone by since I scribbled reminiscences on the *Malta* and recorded your birth in 1896. The past five years have been the years of the Great War, the *anni mirabiles* which will live in your memory for ever. Throughout you have worked hard as a V.A.D. ; you have been an X-ray operator at hospitals in England and France, you have been rewarded by a V.A.D. Scholarship to go in for a doctor's training, to become an M.D. in the very very dim future.

To complete the account of my career which ended with your birth in 1896, suffice it to say that we three returned to India in 1897. There I became, no doubt by hereditary succession, Collector of Boggleywallah, or, as it is now known, Bhāgalpur. Thence I took charge of Chota Nagpore as Commissioner. Chota Nagpore is an enormous area, with five districts to control, and ten native states. It is not quite so big as the whole of Scotland, but puts Belgium, Holland, Serbia and Switzerland in the shade. As we had only two lines of rails, it would take a letter many weeks to reach me from outlying portions of my kingdom, and would mean a year's travelling to get all over it. Like other big principalities, the work was paradoxically light. In 1901 I retired with the rank of Commissioner.

Canon Barnett's interest got me co-opted on the London School Board as Member for Westminster in 1902. When

the L.S.B. was abolished in 1904, I fought an L.C.C. election for Hammersmith, only losing by eleven votes. The contest was useful to me, for I was co-opted on the L.C.C. Education Committee as one of the five old L.S.B. members for two years. In 1907 my friend Mr. John Burns nominated me to a most useful body, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, where I stayed till 1917, when health considerations compelled me to resign.

During the golden autumn of 1919 I spent two months at Winchester. Except for now and then a casual day's stay, I never had a real opportunity since I left in 1872 of seeing the life of the place. Living in St. Michael's Lodge (reminding me of my old house, Du Boulay's,) the curious feeling came over me that I had never left. My thoughts went over my contemporaries, and I looked up their careers in Wainwright's admirable *Winchester Register*, and cogitated on the impression made on me by my old school-fellows. Let no one be offended at my publishing these impressions, when he reflects that after all, as one sees now, we were a band of brothers and have reached a time of life when a little publicity does no harm. Occasionally I have divagated, but as a rule have only described those with whom I had acquaintance, or whom I knew well by sight and casual reputation: it is fair to remember how slight and mistaken a boy's impressions of school-fellows often are.

When attending Sunday evening chapel for the first time for fifty years, sitting in a stall behind the choir, hearing the old chimes peal out "Bells go double," and watching the new generation come pouring in, it seemed to me I was a disembodied spirit. I looked out for an overgrown, untidy boy, answering to the name Ritchie, and tried to watch where he would sit. I listened to the invigorating sermon on the first Sunday of Michaelmas half, and resolved to profit by the Head Master's sound advice on life. It took me a little time to realise that, for better or worse, my career was over, and the real actors were all sitting in front of me.

My thoughts go back in the first place to the boys in the old house. Pre-eminent among them is Edward Grey (1876-1880), now Lord Grey of Falloden. After a long tenure of the Foreign Secretaryship, he was in charge of foreign affairs in July and August, 1914. Then he sat at his desk almost continuously by day and by night, making the dogged struggle of his life for the cause of peace, never losing his head for an instant.

The Hon. W. W. Palmer (1873-1878) was two years senior to Grey. As Lord Selborne, in the Colonial Office, at the Admiralty, and as British representative in South Africa, he has played his part with manly straightness.

Herbert Fisher (1878-1884) has distinguished himself as a don and an historian. He has been a success as Minister for Education, to which post an educationist was at last appointed.

Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Altham, K.C.B. (1868-1874) was a cheery small boy. His powers of organisation are remarkable, and came to the front in Gallipoli. He is now Quartermaster-General in India. He and his elder brother, the Rev. Altham Surtees Altham (1864-1869), were a pair of thicks,<sup>1</sup> not jigs,<sup>2</sup> but not a bit the worse for that.

Temporary Major-General Kenyon, R.E. (1867-1873) was a very small boy with white hair. He was the oldest Wykehamist to serve in the trenches. At the big meeting in 1918 in Lincoln's Inn Hall to discuss the War Memorial, when Kenyon rose to combat the megalomania of the new plans with stubborn pertinacity, it was the boy Kenyon with the old gestures, the old emphasis of diction that stood before me. He was the second of a family of seven boys who all became Wykehamists.

Our one artist was Alan Hook (1868-1872), son of the sea painter. Hook had an original and delightful person-

<sup>1</sup> Thick = stupid. "His wit is as thick as Tewkesbury mustard" (2 *Henry IV*, II. iv.).

<sup>2</sup> Clever man. "There domineering with his drunken een makes jigs of us" (2 *Henry IV*, I. i.).

ality. Very shy, modest to diffidence, he passed from Winchester to an artist life in Surrey. There he lived, happy in his art, keeping large flocks of goats, like "William the Conqueror" in Kipling's story. He has now emigrated to Vancouver.

Kestell Cornish (1870-1879) has become Bishop of Madagascar, succeeding his father (an old Wick) in the post.

Clinton Engleheart (1878-1883)—surely one of Pope Gregory's angels—has been chaplain of the Leper Asylum, Robin Island, Capetown, since 1901.

George Pascal Keble du Boulay (1878-1884) joined the Universities Mission to Central Africa in 1893. He died of fever in East Africa in 1895. To him a brass has been placed in Chapel Cloisters, where they are commemorated whom the gods love.

I may be allowed to speak of two relations. Doctor Edward Ritchie, my youngest brother (1873-1878), was Captain of houses Six, and stroke of the College Four.<sup>1</sup>

After Cambridge and St. Thomas's, he settled down at Chandler's Ford, seven miles from Winchester. He managed all the village choirs of that part of Hants, and assembled them at cathedral festivals. He doctored the poor people for practically nothing, and the happiest part of his fate was his marriage. He died comparatively young in 1913, and the whole country-side attended his burial.

My nephew, Francis Warre-Cornish (1884-1889), was son of my sister and of the Vice-Provost of Eton. He joined the Somersets in 1892, and after a short spell of Gibraltar went with his regiment to India, exchanged into the Indian Army, and was appointed to the 17th Bengal Cavalry in 1895. He won the Kadir Cup (the blue ribbon of pig-stickers in India) in 1901. In the same year he died, as the result of malaria poisoning, at Rawal Pindi, aged thirty.

It was not his lot to see much active service, but he was

<sup>1</sup> Winchester's first Four was a canvassed boat, called the "Fairy," and was launched on the Itchin in 1862.



■ remarkable soldier. He was fitted for command of his men by his Winchester training, and firm and sweet temper. He made a consummate cavalry leader, for he and his horse moved as one creature. He studied animal drawing in Dresden, and his talent was very marked. He resembled the best types of Rudyard Kipling's heroes—the Forest Conservator who delighted in the *Rukh*, Lutyens who captained the Skidars' team and rode the Maltese Cat, Georgie Cottar, the Brushwood Boy. He loved his Afridi and Pathan troopers. He toured in their country on leave, going from one fortified village to another, while they entertained him with great pomp.

His letters home were witty and clever, with their excellent illustrations. They have been edited by my sister for private circulation. I can honestly say that no book on India gives a better description of the inner life of soldiers and natives, or enables one to form a clearer idea of the passing strange life of the young Englishman in the East.

Francis and I met pretty often in India, though we were parted by a thousand miles or more. His letters to me were delightful, and one never knew what marvellous incident they were to describe. These were recounted by him with infectious humour. Under it all one felt the deep sense of honour, religion and sympathy which bound him indissolubly to his men. It is of stuff like this that our magnificent Indian Army has been created. Woe be to that man who ever interferes with the system under which India is safe-guarded!

Captain H. Brabazon Urmston (1866-1870), ■ particularly pleasant, jovial fellow, entered the 6th Punjab Infantry and lost his life on the Hazārah frontier in the act of trying to save ■ wounded comrade in 1888, when we had ■ brush with the Akodais tribe.

L. B. Sebastian (1863-1869), barrister, is ■ great man on City Educational Charities and Institutes. As a boy he was called Bino, and for three years was the Head of the House.

Arthur Leach (1863-1869), barrister and charity com-

missioner (whom we have recently lost), has written first-rate books full of historical research on Winchester and early English schools. Somewhat brusque and overbearing in manner, he was a strong character. I heard a characteristic story of him. On his first arrival at Winchester, Du Boulay warned the new boys that a certain street on the way to school was out of bounds. The next day Du Boulay found Leach walking down it with the utmost *sang-froid* and without the slightest excuse, and was obliged to "order his name" to be flogged. Leach admitted, in after-years, that this prompt treatment made a new boy of him.

Ralph Thicksesse (1869–1874) has changed as little as any boy of my time, and his wrinkled face is perpetually lit up with grins of fun and quaint humour. He has become a poet as well as a solicitor, and sent me, "with memories of a long friendship," for which I was very grateful, a book of sonnets. These are in the Wordsworthian style of sagacious comments on the tendencies of the day. There is one on the General Election (of 1906), "Since you refused to do this people right," another on Cromwell's statue (newly erected near Westminster Hall), "What thinkest thou, Cromwell, as thou standest there," and another on the first Hague Conference.

Arthur Montague Bernard (1864–1871), on the other hand, has altered more than any other man, with the cares of the management of the *Guardian* and heavy county work upon his shoulders. I had a formal correspondence with his daughter about a lecture on India in a county town, when it suddenly occurred to me that she might be the daughter of my old friend, and I gladly accepted a night's hospitality. Bernard was Captain of houses Six at football, and looked like a young Greek god with yellow locks flying as he led his team.

Charles Darwin (1869–1873), from being a sprawling, overgrown boy has turned into the neatest of British Colonels (of the Durham Light Infantry), with medals and clasps for the South African War.

Robert Hunter (1865-1870) was a particularly smart, neat boy, even now easily recognisable in the solicitor at the top of his profession distinguished for height and strength.

In the summer of 1909 (July 25th), when Sir Edward Grey was Foreign Secretary, and Lord Selborne had returned from South Africa, it occurred to the fertile imagination of Thicknesse to propose and then to organise a dinner in honour of our two great statesmen, of Mr. and Mrs. Du Boulay, and of Mr. Cook, who had succeeded Du Boulay as House Master. All Du Boulayites and Cookites were invited, and we dined at the Whitehall Rooms, a company of 105, from Canon Nairn, the first boy with whom the house opened in 1862, down to the senior boy of the present house. Thus forty-four years were represented. As we drove up we found ourselves among old acquaintances whose very names we had not thought of since we departed, and grey-headed men who had come to the house long after us. Sudden bursts of recognition went on everywhere, and the buzz of talk was unique. We sat down to dine, and the process went on, for we spent half the evening trying to make each other out. To Mr. and Mrs. Du Boulay it must have been an affecting experience.

Passing the College and other houses, I can only select a few boys for notice.

Sir Charles Lucas, K.C.B., of the Colonial Office (retired) (1865-1872), is well known in colonial politics for his travels, his *Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, and his presence at every important Colonial gathering. I wish to speak of his influence at the Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, St. Pancras. Since he came up to London, as a young man, till the present day, when he is principal, he has been identified, body and soul, with this famous institution. He can be compared to any of his predecessors, from F. D. Maurice in 1854 downwards, and to visit the College will show how much he is beloved there. A speech from Lucas is worth going a long day's journey to hear, especially, perhaps, at the College Christmas

Supper. From grave to gay, from lively to severe, he passes with his eyes twinkling under his heavy eyebrows. His puns are exquisite, and for once one is not ashamed at shrieking with laughter over such things. He had learned the great lesson that our debt to our great Founder is to spread his spirit among the magnificent material that is to be found in London working men. Their spirit through the Great War, and their war services, were very remarkable.

Edmund Morshead (1861–1867) was a college man who, after he retired from being a don at the school, joined Lucas in London and helped his work. That Morshead was a true poet no one will deny who looks at his poem in the first *Wykehamist* of October, 1866, on Cathedral Music. They will show the fine imagination in the seventeen-year-old poet :

“ But oh ! thrice blest was he who bade thee rise  
To God, as man’s accepted sacrifice,  
And bade thee there thy harmonies outpour  
Where kneeling multitudes their God adore,” etc.

Mush’s (Morshead’s nickname) humour and originality impressed generations of Wykehamists. His metrical translations of Greek tragedians are much appreciated. He delighted in his native county of Devon, but gave it up cheerfully on retirement to live in a low quarter in Southwark.

There is a good story of how, on one occasion, he exercised the duties of a general. Winchester had won the Ashburton Shield, and their team was expected back one evening with the coveted trophy. Numbers of volunteers had assembled in outer court, but there happened to be nobody to take command and march them up to the station. Morshead came strolling through court, and was appealed to. “ Nothing simpler,” said he. “ At the word of command, let each pair ‘ socius ’ (i.e. take a companion) ; then let each ‘ sociussed ’ pair choose another pair, and then—march.” This complicated manœuvre was carried out with great *éclat*, to the admiration of all beholders.



Charles Alfred Cripps (1866-1871), now Lord Parmoor, a Colleger, wore the same benevolent smile that characterises him to-day, and was very popular.

Two Collegers became distinguished newspaper editors. George Buckle (1866-1872) was a tall, slenderly built boy who read admirably the part of Beatrice in the Shakespeare Society. Edward Cook (1869-1876), whose loss we are deploring, was the great propagandist of Ruskin, and editor of the *Pall Mall*, the *Westminster*, and the *Daily News*. Each of these boys, I need hardly say, had an admirable training for his future career by editing the *Wykehamist*. No paper had more critical readers. Going over its past numbers, I am struck with the uniform good taste and good feeling that it has always shown during its existence.

Banbury senior (1864-1873) has for many years been a well-known member of the House of Commons. There he is distinguished by his pertinacity, and the care with which he observes all the forms of the House.

Dr. Tanner (1864-1868) resembled him in his pertinacity, but in no other quality. Tanner was a tall, unsmiling, gaunt boy in Commoners. He took to medicine and politics, became a Roman Catholic, and represented Cork for sixteen years. In the House he quite forgot that "manners makyth man." He has now passed away, and surely the Recording Angel, in handing in his name, will drop a tear upon many parliamentary incidents, and blot them out for ever.

I can count but only one actor, but that was Sir Francis Benson (1871-1878). Nobody who has witnessed his big pole-jump with a flag-staff into the battlements of Harfleur as Henry V would gainsay his athletic prowess, or be surprised to hear that he won the Inter-'Varsity three miles race for Oxford. Since his school days he had never forgotten Winchester. He himself had addressed the boys from his heart during the war, and all at Winchester are very fond of him.

Dr. H. B. Gray (1865-1870), a keen football player,

became Head Master and Warden of Bradfield College. In the Chalkpit Greek Theatre of Bradfield, one admired his stout brawny arms, as well as his Greek pronunciation, when he took the part of Admetus at short notice in *Electra*. He is well known for his keenness and originality in educational work.

The Rev. W. C. Parr, Colleger (1865–1871), was the reliable, universally trusted captain of the Rifle Corps in my day. He led us to victory in 1871, when we won the Ashburton Shield. He has served as chaplain to the forces in Malta, South Africa and India with the same steady and cheery influence that commended him strongly to us at school.

Archdeacon C. C. Mackarness (1863–1869), a beaming Colleger, good at cricket and football, became Archdeacon of the East Riding of Yorks.

Bishop Freddie Baines (1871–1876) has been in South Africa since 1893, and is now Bishop of Natal.

Robert de Courcy Laffan (1867–1871) was a good man lost to the Indian Civil, for which he passed in 1872. But our public schools gained what India lost. He became Head Master of King Edward's School, Stratford-on-Avon (1885–1895), and Head of Cheltenham from 1895 to 1899. Since then he has become a prominent promoter of Olympic Sports, sadly interrupted since the war. He has now taken up the Sports again, and no doubt will pilot the next Quadrennial gathering to success and look after the competitors from the British Empire.

William Macaulay (1866–1867), of a distinguished family, did not make a good start at "books,"<sup>1</sup> in old Commoners. He was an extraordinarily plucky football player. He has been a hard rider and a well-known don of King's, Cambridge, of which he is now Vice-Provost.

James Parker Smith (1867–1873) was Fourth Wrangler, and bracketed equal to the seconded Smith's prizeman. He was the first Wykehamist, since a long time, to achieve such mathematical honours. He owed his grounding to

<sup>1</sup> The name of the classes in which the school is divided.

Mr. Richardson, newly appointed Master in College. He was a strong Unionist in Parliament, and is the present Warden of the College. Sir Ernest Moon, K.C. (1868-1873) was one of the straightest and most unassuming boys of our time (he will forgive me). He is now counsel to the Speaker.

L. C. Hopkins (1868-1871), modest and unassuming, has carved out a very successful career in the Chinese Consulate, winding up as Consul-General for Tientsin and Peking.

Dr. R. O. Moon (1878-1884) I have had the good fortune to meet since retirement. As a doctor he has served in Greece for the Greeks against the Turks in 1897, and in South Africa with our forces in 1901, and has done his bit in the Great War. He is well known for his philanthropic doctoring of the poor, and has worked at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. He is a strong Radical.

Let me say a few more words of the dons under whom I passed.

John Desborough Walford, always known as John Des, was simply loved, both by the boys and the whole staff of dons. As an old bachelor, he lived in College Street, and his great delight was to entertain us boys at breakfast, and to take the keenest interest in our doings. For general benevolence he was more like "my Uncle Toby" than any man I ever met. I remember seeing Dr. Ridding and two or three other capped-and-gowned dons laughing as they met at his door on a glorious May morning, each with a bouquet to present to John Des on his birthday.

William Awdry—an old 'Varsity oar—was a very tall, striking, handsome man with clear-cut features, and a grave, exalted expression. He was second master at Winchester for five years, and then found his life's work in Japan as Bishop of Tokyo. He returned home, comparatively young, to die, bearing great pain with stoical fortitude. He soothed himself at the end by writing on the Mystery of Pain.

Fred Morshead was a great light of the Alpine Club.

The guides called him "l'homme qui rit et marche comme le diable," "l'enragé," "l'homme qui ne transpire jamais et qui rit toujours." Brisk, smiling, walking very fast, he was a universal favourite in the school. He wisely conjoined school-mastering with civic dignities, and was a popular Mayor of Winchester.

Charles Criffith, irreproachable in get-up, was warm-hearted and genial to all the boys in a way that might have surprised some who only noticed his courteous bearing. We could not help smiling when he invariably translated "Pulcherrima Dido" ■■ "Dido—ahem—fairest of the fair."

Finally, last but not least, comes the Rev. George Richardson. He was ■ don of a totally new type in the school. Son of ■ Carlisle engineer, he was educated at Carlisle Grammar School, and St. John's, Cambridge, (Third Wrangler.) He was fat, rosy, bearded, with a voice that seemed to begin and finish his sentences with a "row-row-row." He made an admirable Falstaff in the Shakespeare Reading Society, and the comparison at once gives the key to one side of his personality. For the rest, he was sincerely religious, strongly democratic, and raised the whole school by his powerful character. He abolished, by his influence, the old snobbish feeling of contempt for Collegers. The *Wykehamist*, in its obituary notice of his wife—(always known as Mrs. Dick)—said: "From Princesses of the blood royal, down to the roughest of Father Dolling's flock, none was too grand, none was too poor, to feel at home with Mrs. Dick. Boxing Day holiday-makers, Savoy Chapel choir-boys, and our own choristers must retain a hundred pleasant memories of her hospitality. All she asked was truth and sincerity. The sum and substance of her philosophy lay in keeping the dust off her rose-coloured spectacles."

The ladies took their full share in the life of the place, though we boys, unless specially under their influence, knew little of them. Of Mrs. Harry Moberly the *Wykehamist* says: "It would be hard to say how greatly the



sympathetic care and gracious influence of that lady contributed to the success of the house."

A word about the successors in the Headship. Dr. Burge<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Montagu Rendall have welcomed me in a way that goes straight to the heart of an old Indian who returns home after long periods of exile. Mr. Rendall was specially good to a large party of Indians whom I brought down, and impressed them, permanently I think, with the worth of a great public school. Indians are shy about expressing themselves, and I remember one who, when he stood in Ridding's field, looked all round, sighed and said, "It does so remind me of Chittagong." Two places more unlike I cannot conceive.

One Head Master had a good story that, when he was visited by H.H. the Aga Khan of India, he took the Khan to see the Warden, Dr. Lee, at the Warden's Lodge. Previously he had been explaining to his visitor how old the school was, and how much it owed to William of Wykeham. He was considerably surprised when, coming downstairs after the visit, the Aga Khan exclaimed to him, "I never knew till now that you English had people five hundred years old, like your *old Founder* whom we have just been visiting!"

I wonder how much there is in the following old "chestnut" which I cannot resist recounting in the words of the *Wykehamist*. One day at "books" in 1860, when Dr. Ridding was the master, the question of which the correct answer was *damnosa* passed down from senior to junior. It finally reached Still, as he sat junior, and he called out, "Don't know, sir." "Go up, Still," the master said, and Still, obedient but full of amazement, went to the senior place, a move of fifty places. And it is needless to say that the boys who sat near Still twigged the joke, and enjoyed it fully with no feeling of jealousy, for Still was liked by everyone.

I am bound to say that very little cause raised much mirth. On returning from India, I gave a lecture in

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently Bishop of Southwark and then of Oxford.

school on Bengal, and while Dr. Burge was making introductory compliments to the lecturer, it suddenly struck me that he was sitting in Dr. Ridding's—our Head Master's—chair, where I, kneeling at the middle of the lowest seat, immediately under the inscription on the west wall of the school—*Aut disce, aut discede, manet sors tertia cædi*—had received proper punishment. All thoughts of my lecture vanished; the dim past alone remained. The small boys in the dark perceived that I was nervous, and cheered statistics in an inexplicable way. I *was* glad when the lecture came to an end, and am extremely sorry that I did not confess to the boys what was in my mind.

Among Indian civilians :

The Hon. Ashley Eden was the third son of the third Lord Auckland and Bishop of Bath and Wells, and nephew of the second Earl of Auckland, Governor-General of India. He came from Rugby to Winchester, which he entered in January, 1845, aged fourteen. There he stayed till 1849, in which year he received a nomination to the Indian Civil Service. He spent 1850 and 1851 at Haileybury, but did not pass out—the last of his term, let good Wykehamists note with sorrow—till December, 1852.

In Bengal he did the common executive work well. By the old system, a civilian got leave in certain circumstances only as far as the Cape, and in 1856 Eden went on medical leave to the Mauritius, and exposed the wrongs of the Indian coolies there. But it was while Collector of Baraset—now a subdivision of the district adjoining Calcutta—that his great work was done. A young man of twenty-five, entirely on his own responsibility, he faced the powerful indigo interest in Bengal and took strong action. It was a very dangerous thing for a young official to do, as he would certainly have been broken if he had not received warm backing from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. Fortunately Sir John Peter Grant was his Lieutenant-Governor, and Grant gave him strong support. Then ensued a most interesting struggle between the indigo interest and Ashley Eden, backed by John Peter Grant. The victory finally

lay with the reforming civilians. If anyone wants to recall that striking period, he will find it well told in Sir George Trevelyan's *Competition—wallah*.

Nowadays, the type of Ashley Eden has vanished from India as completely as the dodo. It is a very great misfortune for India never to have civilians again like Eden. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the reasons for the change.

Sir Ashley Eden had been a friend of my father's, and looked after me during my first three years in India. He had the straight glance and strong mouth that marks the great administrator of the Lincoln type. Withal he was extremely witty and jovial, and was very much liked by the Indians.

Sir John Hewett (Colleger, 1865-1873) is noticeable. After laying down the Governorship of his province he continued during the war in doing great work in Mesopotamia, so that he has served for forty-two years. He reminds me of Ulysses :

“ Much have I seen of men and known ; cities of men,  
And manners, climates, councils, governments.”

While employed in the Secretariat, Hewett continued to play cricket at Simla. He used to take down endless boxes of files to Annandale, and only laid them aside when it came to his turn to go to the wicket. Then he invariably enjoyed a good innings, after which he would return to his dispatch-boxes like a giant refreshed. Fielding was excused to him.

Henry Luttman-Johnson (1856-1862) served for many years as Judge in Assam, with the difficult task of deciding between Assam tea-planters and coolies. He did this with perfect fairness of mind, and with the strongest determination to get justice done, so far as things would allow. His reports were very clever and readable, for he never adopted meaningless officialese. Therefore the people used to call his reports cynical, which they were not in the least. He escaped being decorated, the lot of few of our best men. Another non-*décoré* is my friend, J. D. Anderson, now well

known in India for his mastery of Bengali and Indian literature at Cambridge, and for his real friendship for the best Indians. On retiring, Luttman-Johnson did good work on the lines of Sir Charles Elliot in the schools and institutions of London, and especially on the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

Sir Herbert Risley (Colleger, 1864–1869) became a student of castes, tribes and customs for all India, and wrote as a pundit on these subjects. A clever lady novelist travelling in India delighted in meeting him, as he knew more about marriage customs than anybody, and supplied her psychological mind with fascinating details. He always maintained the attractive Oxford style in conversation.

W. C. Macpherson (1870–1876) was a dogged Scot, and succeeded, as he deserved, in winning a place high up in the land settlement hierarchy by indefatigable patience and good sense. When in charge of a planting district, his most unruly subject was his planter brother. The two used to write letters home denouncing each other.

Up to the present Winchester has never been able to boast of a Governor-General of India. She has now, at last, got a fine representative in the post in Lord Chelmsford. As the Hon. F. J. N. Thesiger (1881–1887) he captained the Oxford cricket team, and became a Fellow of All Souls. On the London School Board he worked hard and spoke with effect, and bore the same character on the L.C.C. In 1905 he began his colonial career in Queensland. In 1914 he at once resumed his rank as captain in the Dorset Regiment, and went to India with his regiment. In 1915 he became Governor-General. Every G.-G., without exception, is unjustly abused. I know, from what I have heard, that he is much liked by all Indians that count. In the strong line of G.-G.'s the torch is in worthy hands.

Francis St. Clair Grimwood (1867–1874) was, in popular parlance, a very gentlemanly boy, rosy-cheeked and easy-going. He got a post-mastership at Merton, and took his B.A. and M.A. I met him on his arrival in Calcutta, and



enjoyed seeing such a good specimen of young Englishman serving out in the Civil Service. In 1891, at the age of thirty-seven, he was one of the victims of the terrible Manipur tragedy, and met his death in company with the Chief Commissioner and Colonel Skene. There is no doubt that he was absolutely unsuited for a wild country like Manipur, where his administration did not advance British prestige, whereas, stationed elsewhere, he would have done admirably.

I wish I could claim Horace Hutchinson (1871-1872) as a Wykehamist, but he left early for Charterhouse, and I wish that I had found out this fact earlier. In a game of golf which he kindly played with me, he beat me eighteen holes up. If I had known that he was a very small boy when I was a prefect, I should not have been in such funk of his prowess as I was.

If I felt choky in chapel after a long term of years, my heart went up to the sky as I watched again another football match in Meads in the clear November air,—the well-known cries, the indescribable jovial spirit of the players, no one for himself, all for the team. I take the following from the *Wykehamist*. If it is doggerel, it represented my feelings.

“ White on the ground the hoar-frost lies,  
And white are the bare-branched trees ;  
The sun shines clear from the blue-hazed skies  
Through fleeting mists that freeze.

Above, the grey old chapel tower,  
Below, the red and brown.  
A breathless hush, then strikes the hour,  
And the heads of the “ hot ” go down.

The man who checked a headlong rush,  
The cheers that shout his name ;  
A plant, a dash, a moment’s hush,  
The goal that wins the game.

When, through the mists of fifty years,  
We gaily look behind,  
This is the scene which first appears  
Deep printed in our mind.

At cricket we were badly beaten by Eton, year after year, during my time, leaving us miserable, but determined to lick one day ; and this we did in the two most exciting matches I have ever seen, in 1870 at Eton, and 1871 at Winchester.

In 1870, in the glorious new cricket-field given by Dr. Ridding, Lord Harris, then the Hon. G. Harris, captained Eton, and Alfred Lyttelton, aged fifteen, was in the eleven. Winchester wanted 76 in the last innings to win. Everybody now thought the match was ours, and old judges of the game were heard to say that four wickets were the most we ought to lose. But six went down for 59 only ! and finally 11 runs were needed at the last wicket, and Moyle and Awdry—who was put in for his bowling and never made a run—had to get them. The score crept slowly up. At last two runs were wanted to tie and three to win. The suspense while the Eton eleven were changing their place was—horrible. Then Awdry made the winning hit amid the most wild cheer that might have reached Cathedral.

In 1871 Winchester went to Eton and played in the old playing-fields. This time, at the beginning of the last innings, Eton went in to get 81 runs to win. The finest bit of fielding in the match got rid of Ridley. Longman hit a ball hard to coverpoint, which Spencer Collin fielded clean and dashed in to the top of the bails. Rawlinson put the wicket down, and Ridley was out, amid the cheers of the Wykehamists and the applause of the Etonians. The match was finally won by Winchester by 8 runs.

In both years we had the same marvellous bowlers, Moyle and Raynor, who were unplayable by Eton. In 1871 A. A. Rawlinson (1867–1872), an amusing character, was put in for his wicket-keeping. He went in last and got 10 and 21 not out, the best score on our side, making square-leg hits from off-balls, and good drives from balls dead on his wicket.

Spencer Collin I have kept up with to this day, and have known his younger brother, Edward, in the Bengal Civil Service, an Eton Colleger, since we were at Cambridge

together—a good sportsman and a genial pillar of the Bengal Service.

The old School History shows that, at England's crises, Winchester supplied stalwarts. Warden Love was the College Warden from 1613 to 1630, and the best epitaph of any son to any father was written on his tomb by Nicholas Love. Nicholas was a Wykehamist—and a regicide.

During Cromwell's siege of Winchester, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, a Wykehamist with a nephew on the foundation at the time, was a friend and correspondent of the Warden's. On the wintry afternoon of December 12, 1642, he came to the College with a small party of horse. His troopers bivouacked in the outer court, and Fiennes paid £28 16s. for the night's lodging.

Lord Grandison, the weak royal defender of the castle and city of Winchester, after surrendering, made his escape to Portsmouth, leaving Sir William Waller master of the town.

Cromwell abolished the Dean and Chapter. They were restored by the Merry Monarch.

During my long stay at Winchester I felt—

“*Ridet annus, prata rident  
Nosque rideamus.*”

Since the appointment of the new Dean I feel sure that all reforms advocated by Canon Barnett will be carried out.

Bishop Ken, who entered Winchester in 1652 and became a Fellow of New College in 1657, is one of our great historic characters. He kept his faith pure and his honour unsullied through the dark times in which he lived. He was the type of the quiet but courageous English gentleman. When Charles II visited the Deanery in Cathedral Close, bringing Nell Gwyn in his train, Ken refused admittance to Nellie. With his schoolfellow, Turner, he was tried and acquitted with the rest of the Seven Bishops in 1688 for refusing to read the Declaration of Liberty of Conscience. The indefatigable old hero was displaced after

the revolution for refusing the Oath of Allegiance to William III. And then Thomas Ken, dreading the grave as little as his bed, went to his rest.

Lastly, let me recall Sir Herbert Stewart (Colleger, 1855-1861). He was mortally wounded at Abu Klea at the age of forty-two, England's most distinguished Major-General "for distinguished service." A beautiful memorial gate has been erected by Wykehamists between Chapter and Cloisters. A Memorial panel stands in St. Paul's Cathedral, near The Duke of Wellington. Lord Wolseley, in telegraphing his death to England, said, "No braver soldier or more brilliant leader of men ever wore the Queen's uniform."

Herbert Webbe (1869-1875) was a boy with a strangely winning expression under a mat of thick red hair, and became the head of Harry Moberly's house. At Oxford he captained the cricket eleven. He then found the work of his life in London, in bringing to bear his strong influence on those who had not had his advantages. He died at the age of thirty (in a Sunday School). His friends founded in his memory a club for boys in Bethnal Green, and "Webbe Tent" in Ridding's Field. His brass is in the cloisters.

If I were asked who were the best Wykehamists of my time, and of the succeeding generation, I should answer, Sir Charles Lucas and Lord Grey of Falloden. They two best gave forth what they had received from their Founder.

What Wykehamists have done during the war the following table shows :

	X	A	B	O	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	Total
Served in War .	248	207	207	221	200	224	196	194	228	209	80	2,214
Killed . . .	■	48	40	42	34	41	53	39	51	43	37	482
Wounded . .	54	38	38	42	43	42	45	47	45	44	17	455
Mentions . .	94	61	118	99	117	104	84	133	113	104	11	1,038
X—College.		O—Du Boulay's.			F—Hawkin's.				I—Turner's.			
A—Wickham's.		D—Fearon's.			G—Sergeant's.				K—Beloe's (opened			
B—Moberly's.		E—Morshead's.			H—Bramston's.				1905).			

Decorations were given as follows : M.C., 320 ; D.S.O., 214 ; C.M.G., 71 ; K.C.M.G., 6 ; C.B., 33 ; K.C.B., 8 ; K.B.E., 2 ; V.C., 4 ;



Foreign Decorations, 140.

The total of Decorations was 871, including C.B.E., O.B.E., and M.B.E.

It is interesting to note how equal each house is to the others in conscribing and bearing the hardships of the war.

The King has expressed his admiration "of the splendid rally to the Flag by Wykehamists who have nobly upheld the honour of their great Founder."

## CHAPTER V

1872-1875

### LONDON AND CAMBRIDGE

I STAYED at Winchester till Easter 1872, when I was eighteen. I had then made up my mind to try for the I.C.S., and it was settled that I should go and coach with Wren, the great London crammer.

One holiday at Chamonix, Richmond and I were given a treat of an expedition to the Grands Mulets with Henri Devouassoud, the brother of Douglas Freshfield's favourite guide, François. The Mer de Glace was wonderful with the blue depth of the ice, the great crevasses and icicles. The weather was fine, the sunset glorious over the ice and snow, and we at once decided irresponsibly that we must go up Mont Blanc the next day. We started in the starlight and trudged up through the snow, getting a grand view, and arriving in time for *table d'hôte* at Chamonix, to find ourselves forgiven for our escapade, and the family proud of our performance, which they had been watching through a telescope. I was just sixteen, and Richmond not quite fifteen.

I remember coming up to London in 1872 from school on leave to attend the thanksgiving service at St. Paul's for the Prince of Wales's recovery. It was very impressive. We waited for hours in our seats in St. Paul's, and after the service we wandered among the enormous crowds.

For two Easters we went to Freshwater, where Mrs. Cameron lived with her beautiful maids, and old Cameron, with long white hair, lay in his dressing-gown upstairs. Cammy was tremendous and mysterious, Farringford and

the poet were in the background. Those were lovely spring days in the Island, with the pretty hedges running down to the sea and downs and chalk dips lit up.

Tennyson came to lunch one day at Dimbola. A chirpy little lady, to make conversation, said that there had been a "fair" congregation at church. "You wouldn't have a *foul* one, would you?" growled out Alfred, always a purist for the language.

I went to Wren's for a year and laid myself out to work really hard for the exam. Wren's chickens flourished in Westbourne Grove, right beyond Bayswater, close to brick-fields, and unbuilt-on turnip fields, a depressing region. I had lodgings on the third floor of Tavistock Crescent, a sitting-room and bed-room. On the ground-floor was MacTavish, a little Scotsman from St. Andrew's who had a great grasp of metaphysics on the detestable Bain and Mill basis, one of my subjects. We had many discussions over "metapheesics."

Wren was a genial, loud-voiced man with no nonsense about him. He was full of common sense and excellent ideas on English History, which was his subject. He told me exactly what to read, insisted on one's knowing well what one took up, and laid down that the successful competitor was the one who made fewest mistakes. "A little, thoroughly," was his motto. No greater contrast to the gentlemanly unpractical Winchester system could be conceived. I did nearly all my work at home, and dined in the middle of the day, after which I walked a couple of hours. But, with that exception, I was practically working on most days from 9.30 till after midnight and absorbed in my round of reading—the Classics, Metaphysics, Moral Science, and English History. English Literature was a pleasant relaxation. French I did not bother about till the examination day.

There was one grave, thoughtful tutor, who had a bad cold when he began his first lecture: "Warburton's first work was *The Divine Negation of Noses*. It afterwards turned out that Warburton's first work was *The Divine*

*Legation of Moses.* Hales was a retiring and admirably qualified lecturer on English literature. Sir Rowland Wilson, senior classic, took us in Greek and Latin. But it was not a life that one could have stood very long. I was intensely interested in my subjects, and I thoroughly enjoyed the purposeful existence.

At Easter, 1873, I passed the examination for the Indian Civil and started the probationary course for two years, reading Law, Hindustani, Bengali, Political Economy, and Indian History. For a year I remained in London. Charlie Brookfield was a great ally of mine in those days. He was the most amusing youth, with his mimicry and caricature and jokes. There was a clever and attractive little *vaurien* into whose toils I fell, with whom I used to go about town and dine at restaurants. He was an extraordinarily brilliant little man, with something of genius in him, wrote extremely well, and was thoroughly at home in the *coulisses* of the theatres. He had mysterious relations with a French actress, and told us most extraordinary romances; but I haven't the faintest notion of what truth there was in them. They afforded great sport to Brookfield and me. At length I grew heartily sick of him, and found him very difficult to get rid of. He turned out a regular swindler, and vanished, after coming out to India for one year only.

In October, 1874, I entered at Trinity, Cambridge, for a year. I was allowed to confine myself to my Indian work, and this, combined with the necessity of frequent absences to London for case-reporting, necessarily made me rather an outsider. I lived with Richmond's Eton friends, for Richmond had just come up as a Trinity scholar, Hallam and Lionel Tennyson, Edward Lyttelton, Sturgis, Mundy, Cole, and Stephen Spring Rice. Others I need not mention. I liked Cambridge, but I was older than the freshmen and felt *much* older, and never entered into the real life of the place. There were winter visits to Paris and the plays, when I began to appreciate the Français thoroughly. In the way of work, I had a great deal of



going to the Law Courts, first the Police Courts all over London, then to the Old Bailey and Assize Courts, and the Common Law Courts, sitting in those days in Westminster Hall. I was much interested in the drama of life that was there unfolded, and full of admiration for the way in which the magistrates and judges did their work. My course of reading gave me utilitarian ideas, and a false notion that these were sufficient to work out the salvation of the world. Carlyle, however, always outweighed with me Mill and Bain and Herbert Spencer.

Annie Thackeray was very kind to me as well as to how many others of us! One day she took me to see Carlyle, in his old age living at the house at Cheyne Row with his little niece. There was the portrait of Cromwell and the old historical miniatures. Carlyle talked disdainfully about Spencer—Harrbert, and the come-down “from the Psalms of David to Soapy Sam.” With a few touches, he described the end of Haydon, the painter—the whole world running after his pictures one day, and then throwing him over—and his committing suicide.

“I wish ye good luck in India, sair,” he said on leaving; “there’s a fine field there.”

Annie Thackeray took me to supper at the Huxleys’ at St. John’s Wood one Sunday. Lady Colville and Dolly Tennant, afterwards Mrs. Stanley, were of the party. There was an air of absolute conviction and sincerity about Huxley, which impressed me greatly. He was very down upon the anti-vivisectionists, who were making a great noise and were attacking him unfairly. He referred to George Eliot’s connection with Lewes with great severity, maintaining the sacredness of social laws and that she had no right to give them a shock. It was very pleasant to see the great savant with his family party all round him—a truly great man.

Henry Denny Warr, an eccentric barrister and Fellow of Trinity Hall, was very kind to me and Charlie Brookfield, and we were constantly in his rooms. He talked to me like a contemporary about men and things, and was

always original and stimulating. He had a faithful, great heart, with much power of sympathy.

Of the English plays of those days, the most charming was the *Merchant of Venice*, with Ellen Terry, newly returned to the stage after a long absence, as Portia. She was just perfection—tall, gracious and lovely, with her moving voice. The Bancrofts, at the old Prince of Wales's Theatre near the Tottenham Court Road, produced Robertson's plays, *Ours*, *Caste*, *Society*, and *School*. Henry Irving was springing into fame in *The Bells* and Tom Taylor's *Charles I.* Toole, Fechter and Ben Webster as Obenreiser and the old Cellarman in *No Thoroughfare*, and Nellie Farren, at the newly arisen Gaiety, were my favourites.

What more shall I tell you about those days? There were Monday Pops, and divine music, and much excitement about Joachim, who has always been a family divinity. One was in contact with a world of clever and delightful people. I ate my dinners at the Middle Temple, and enjoyed the London life in a silent fashion of my own.

In 1875 the departure for India and the break up-of all these associations began to be pending. We had gone to Lynton for the last summer. Aunt Charlotte was there, and I remember her earnestly saying to me that she could never bear to see me having the same ideas as a thoughtful writer of the day, with no sense of reverence to God or of religion. One afternoon, I sat waiting, in the middle of the family, for the coach to pass that was to carry me off. I had not realised how dreadful it would be, the parting from home. A little niece began to cry, and set my mother and all of us off. I rushed away and made that journey on the coach with a very heavy heart. I took the P. and O. Steamer from Venice. The bell rang, and we moved slowly off down the Lagoon. My heart was very sad at all that I was leaving.



GERALD RITCHIE.

From a portrait in chalks done by Samuel Laurence, taken in 1875 just before he started for India.





## CHAPTER VI

1875

### VOYAGE TO INDIA

THE Adriatic soon began to be rough, and I succumbed, and only remember lying in my bunk watching the moon travel up and down through the porthole, and feeling a muff in the eyes of Mr. Buckland, who shared my cabin. However, I soon revived, and was much amused with the microcosm of the steamer. Mrs. Albert Mangles talked about her parties at Bankipore. Mr. Buckland played whist all day. A bearded civilian gave me advice: in the Civil Service, he said, it was the case of the lion and the mouse, and, if you played your cards well, you were the lion, and Government was the mouse. I'm afraid I never learnt the art. There were some Italians going to Egypt, and a spanking Italian lady, with whom the captain flirted. There was an old Scottish *commerçant* called Box of Dundee, who was much exercised because a large, sallow, Italian lady took possession of his deck-chair, which she never left from morning till night, suffering from sea-sickness as only an old Italian lady can suffer. She did, however, at last abandon the chair, when it was promptly appropriated by the lady's husband, also large and sallow and upset by the sea. This was too much for Box, and he determined to have a fight for his property, a resolution which we all applauded and then assembled to see the result. The Italian refused to budge, and declared that the chair belonged to the ship in voluble Italian. Box stuck to his point in broad Scots, and finally won the day.

We had a day at Brindisi, and a drive in the country—

I was struck by the cactuses and the palms. We dined in the long *salle à manger* of the Hôtel des Indes Orientales, and the civilians made jokes—one felt as if India had begun.

I left the steamer at Alexandria for a week in Egypt. A fat dragoman in a frock-coat and fez took possession of me before I knew where I was, carried me off in a boat, whacked the Egyptian soldiers with a stick till my luggage was put through, hired a carriage and pair, and drove me round the sights. I got rid of him with much difficulty and a large fee.

I found myself in the land of the *Arabian Nights*, with the intense blue sky, the flat white houses, the smell of the sand in the air, and the medley of races. I could hardly close my eyes at night, and was never tired of exploring and feasting my eyes on the strange scenes.

From Alexandria I went to Cairo. Shepheard's was still a long bare caravanserai and was almost deserted. I made friends with a pleasant, cultivated man in white flannel, some sort of vice-consul. A missionary arrived from China, who inquired after the health of the Royal Family. I rode about on a donkey through the Levantine bazaars to Memphis, and past old Cairo to the tombs of the Mamelukes. In those days tourists were not so common as now, and one was rather scowled at in the mosques, especially in the university mosque, the El Azhar, which was thronged. I was struck with the number of one-eyed people, due to the common practice, over a trivial dispute, of raising one's stick and poking it against one's adversary's eye.

My dragoman, number two, bored me, and I chose to go off to the Pyramids alone. The rascally tribe who are the custodians made a fine harvest out of me, as the first tourist of the season and a very green one. In the middle of the pitch-dark, long, slippery, limestone gallery, which conducts to the central chamber of the Pyramid, they demanded bakshish, and reminded me that there were deep pits below. The sunset from the Citadel lighting up the pink desert, with the Pyramids and Sphinx in the distance,

the fertile Nile Valley and the bold cliffs of Muhattam, the view of the city below with countless mosques, the smoke and the hoarse roar from the parched throats breaking their fast in the Ramadan, were a great impression.

From Cairo I crawled to Suez by the slowest train in the world. We kept stopping without rhyme or reason in the middle of the desert. I sailed from Suez in a felucca out to my new steamer, the *Avoca*, on a lovely moonlight night after watching the mountains round the head of the bay turn from rosy pink to purple, dark blue and black in the sunset.

On the *Avoca* I found Sir Edward Bayley and his charming daughters. Sir Edward was a typical Member of Council, experienced, suave and pleasant. The ship was crowded and uncomfortable. I had lost my deck-chair, but I read my Gibbon steadily and listened to what everybody had to tell me about India. We landed at Aden with its jagged lava crags. I thoroughly enjoyed the sea, with the golden sunsets, and the stars in the Arabian Sea.

## CHAPTER VII

1875-77

### CALCUTTA AND DIAMOND HARBOUR

*February* 16.—Yesterday evening, Peggy, being the fourth from Colombo, Major K., one of our passengers, died. He was brought on board, very ill with Peshawar fever. We had glimpses of his wife, who had been devotedly nursing him alone, and also herself, we heard, had not long before recovered from enteric. She was a sweet-looking lady, with that look of absorption in a great anxiety which makes everything seem as in a dream. The two little children are too young to understand what has befallen them, and are playing about the deck as usual. It is a fresh morning—the sea very dark blue, with white flecks—and the wash of waters seems, as I have felt since, in harmony with the feeling of death. The funeral was held to-day on the main deck. The ship's captain, a tall, thin, grizzled man, read the service with emotion. As the time came to consign the coffin to the deep the poor widow made a motion forward as if to prevent it, and burst into uncontrollable sobs. One felt that she was parting with all that made up her life. Her husband had both doctored and nursed her through her enteric.

. . . . .

Well do I remember my first arrival in India, the purple hills and the brushwood clouds, in the early dawn, as we ran into Bombay Harbour.



R. H. Wilson, of the Bengal Civil Service (who has had the distinction of presenting a Pre-Raphaelite "Transfiguration" to the National Gallery), took me off to a hotel with huge bare rooms and dirty matting. Out of window I spied a ryot ploughing with a pair of big bullocks. We went across the blue bay in a launch to Elephanta, the lofty caves surrounded by scrub jungle, and looked on the huge rock sculptures of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. Here was the India at last that I had read of so much, and the dim childish associations returned.

From Bombay I made the long railway journey to Lucknow, full of wonder at all the views, the sights at the railway stations and the bigness of the plains. I reached Lucknow late at night, disentangled myself from the vast native crowd, and drove, dusty and weary, to the mess of the 13th Hussars, and Arthur Brookfield, my brother-in-law's bungalow. Arthur was out, but his chum gave me dinner and champagne, and we sat out in the verandah looking at the wonderful balmy night, the cicadas shrilling, the doors all open. It was like a dream. Presently Arthur appeared, much surprised to see me as my letter had gone astray: friendly, full of jokes and curses for India. I went to bed, but not to sleep.

Next day I went over to the mess-house, and the hussars came in, in white uniforms. Baker Russell was the major. The colonel and officers were affable enough to me, but the way they spoke of India was depressing. Arthur rode out with me in his long military frock-coat and frogs. One night we went to a "gaff"—soldiers' theatricals.

From Lucknow I went to Benares via Fyzabad. I looked out on the tops of trees, and wondered when I should be camping. At Benares I went up and down the sacred river and saw Brahmins and all the wonders of the ghâts, and then went on to Calcutta. I arrived in the early morning, and, passing Government House, I perceived a pair of adjutants standing perfectly motionless

each on one leg on the two pillars of the gates. In those days one met adjutants on the Secretary's Walk and everywhere in Calcutta. I presented my letters of introduction and went to stay with Sir Stuart Hogg, chairman of the municipality, in a big, comfortable chownringhee mansion.

From the Hoggs I went to stay with a pleasant old Member of Council, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot. Thence I passed to Belvedere where I was hospitably entertained by Sir Richard Temple. Sir Richard's dapper little body was surmounted by a large head and fierce, bristling moustaches. He was the embodiment of energy, and fancied that he resembled Napoleon III. One evening, after dinner, Sir Richard was to go off to the opera : the carriage was waiting below, with the escort, but there was something wrong about his headgear. Charlie Buckland, the Private Secretary, and Frith, the A.D.C., went flying up and down the great staircase with a pleasing assortment of cocked hats. After Dicky's departure we could not help exploding with laughter. He was the kindest of men, and genuinely interested in young civilians.

I took up my permanent quarters at the United Service Club—always a friendly and hospitable rendezvous. Calcutta was in a state of great excitement over the Prince of Wales's visit. There was a great reception of the Prince and the *Serapis* at Prinsep's Ghât, and many functions, including a state ball and garden party at Belvedere. The Club was crammed full of visitors, including many naval men. There was an imposing Durbar and Chapter of the Star of India on the Maidân, when the Prince, in his helmet and sky-blue satin mantle, comported himself with much dignity. The great chiefs were invested after they had been led forth from their tents. The Begum of Bhopal was entirely swathed in her blue mantle. I never saw her again till she (or a successor) came to lunch with my

sister-in-law, Lady Ritchie, who took her to see the Milbank Elementary School, of which she was manager. Charles Matthews, in his old age, was acting in Calcutta. The Prince scandalised the Calcutta bigwigs greatly when, feeling bored after dinner, at a *bara khana*, he sent for the Matthews to amuse him, and sat chatting with them in a verandah while the company twirled their thumbs inside. I saw Charles Matthews puffing a cheroot in a large barouche on his way to the Durbar, looking perfectly at home.

The Calcutta people were very kindly and hospitable. On Sundays I dined with the Bayleys, with other stray bachelors. In the evenings I rowed on the river in a four or a pair of the Calcutta Rowing Club. We had to thread our way through the great ships. I played rackets; Major Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, was a regular player. Lord Northbrook was Viceroy, and at a Government House dinner-party spoke to me appreciatively of my father.

I was posted at Alipore and found myself under my boardship friend, R. H. Wilson. I had petty cases to decide and drove down to Alipore in my buggy for two or three hours daily. H. M. Tobin, of Rugby fame, joint-magistrate, tall, curly-haired, energetic, cheery, became a great friend. So did Harry Lee, another civilian, with his irrepressible spirits and sense of fun.

I went on a short shooting expedition with Harry Lee and a superintendent of Howrah police, Reilly, down the Hoogly and Rupnarayn rivers. We provisioned our boat with hock and *pâté de foie gras*, and subsisted on little else. The duck made a broad band across the river. We rowed and rowed after them for miles, with small result; but the glories of the great rivers and sky, and the sense of freedom and novelty, made this, my first outing, most enjoyable. I had a boat expedition with Wilson down to Diamond Harbour, during which he was busy in his cabin with red-taped bundles in the usual bureaucratic fashion, while I watched the sights from deck.

So passed my first cold weather agreeably enough. Your grandpapa, Major Thackeray, was stationed at Fort William, where I used to foregather with him.

I was anxious for active work, and in August I was sent to have independent charge of the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the 24 Pergunnahs District. I engaged servants, bought some stores, and we set off in *ticca garis*, twenty-eight miles down the Diamond Harbour road through the green paddy-fields. I felt like another Sancho Panza going to take charge of his principality. The "Harbour" was a misnomer, as there was no port and no shipping—it was only a tiny village on the river, here some six or seven miles broad. My district consisted of a huge tract of paddy-fields, intersected with salt-water creeks, and merging into the jungle and desolation of the Sunderbans, of which I had a large slice. There were no roads, no Europeans, no civilisation of the sort I was accustomed to enjoy. But the river was grand, with its constant procession of ships. There was a river embankment to walk along of an evening—all the rest was swamp.

The people were litigious and perpetually fighting about their crops—rioting and annoying each other with false cases. I remember for whose reading are these pages, and I shall avoid all the administrative details in which I have been steeped for so long. I plunged into my duties *con amore*. A civilian, in an independent charge, has always an anxious time (at least, so it seems to him). The responsibility is great; he is always thinking of what he has to do and of what he has left undone. In reality, everything is the exact opposite of what it appears to him. But his ignorant zeal works well. One of my first cases was that of a little girl-widow, aged perhaps fifteen, who had destroyed her newly born infant out of shame. In another case an old woman was mysteriously murdered, and no clue was forthcoming. An English-speaking, plausible detective was sent from Calcutta, and, sure enough, soon a man was brought before me to confess circumstantially that he had committed the murder for gain. I went with the detective



and the evidently doped victim to the spot of occurrence. His companions, he averred, had drunk country spirit and thrown the cocoa-nut cup into the tank. "Shall we search the tank?" said the detective. I assented, and sure enough the cocoa-nut was fished out. Some other objects were found in the same way. It all seemed unreal; the confessor soon retracted his confession, and said that the police had bullied him into making it. They most certainly had done so, and the case is typical of many that one has to deal with.

I knocked about down the river and up the creeks in my cabined boat, and strode through the rice-fields with the water above my knees to visit the villages and see how the people lived. I must have been a queer object, for they exploded with laughter when my back was turned. In January I went to Saugor Island, at the very mouth of the river near the sea, in the midst of dense jungle, to see the *mela*, or great religious fair, where some hundred thousand Hindus, brought together in boats from everywhere, were congregated to worship Mother Ganga at her contact with the sea. The weather was very rainy and bitterly cold, and I have never seen people in greater wretchedness. They were huddled together with no shelter on the mud bank, unable to light fires properly, and cholera had broken out. I landed in the evening, and made my way with difficulty through the stifling crowd and the crowded wretchedness to my tent, which was crammed full of people who had taken refuge. I made what arrangements I could. But soon the skies cleared, the sun came out and the whole scene altered. The crowd ceased to be wretched, came out in bright raiment, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The Sunderbans (the drowned land) is the dreariest expanse of scrub jungle, intersected with long creeks which the tide fills and then recedes from, leaving sloping muddy banks on which the alligators lie.

My one recreation was to get into Calcutta for a weekend. I remember, one stagnant night, my transport broke down, and, after walking an immense way, I was punted

through the marshes for half the night in a dug-out, or an excavated palm-tree trunk. My friend Tobin at his chummary and Edward Thackeray at the fort got quite accustomed to my turning up in the small hours of the morning after many adventures, and would provide me with pyjamas and a good short night's rest.

Sometimes I would go out in the post-boat and hail a passing liner from Europe and be given a lift and hospitality by the skipper. I came up like this one lovely cold-weather morning, just after Christmas. I met some queer skippers and sailors this way.

There was a strange feeling in the air as I got up one morning in the spring of 1877. It was intensely still and oppressive, while opposite the sky was inky black. As I was watching the scene, I saw a frothy white wave advancing in the river in the distance. I rushed to shut the shutters, but before I could reach them the hurricane had reached us and blown all the breakfast things off the table. It required all my strength to get the shutters closed, and it *did* blow and then became still again. When I looked out I saw that a barque in the river had had its masts snapped off short. Trees were blown down, and the debris of the branches was lying about. A fluent Indian came to propose that the villagers should take refuge in my house. I said it all seemed to be over. Said he, with a deprecating smile, "Sir, we who live in thatched houses are the first to entertain all sorts of fears." Well might he say this, for in 1866 the whole village was destroyed by a cyclone.

This Easter I made a party with Bourdillon, Tobin, Risley (a Wykehamist), Lee and Wells, R.E. (afterwards Colonel Wells of the Persian telegraphs) to the sacred mountain of Parasnāth for the Easter holiday. The mountain scenery, the dryness of the air, the laterite soil, the sturdy aboriginal Santhālis, were a blessed change from the softness and moisture and the dead flat of the delta mouth. We were like schoolboys out for a holiday. We stayed two nights at the lone bungalow on the

summit, 7,000 feet high, and explored the shrines along the craggy ridge of the mountain.

Soon after returning, one hot April Sunday morning, with an unrefreshing wind blowing, and the prospect of life at Diamond Harbour presenting itself as rather dreary, the new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Ashley Eden, appeared in his yacht, the *Rhotas*, off my house, and carried me off for a little cruise down the river. He had a pleasant party on board, and they all landed the next morning at Diamond Harbour and pitied my desolate lot. I saw the *Rhotas* leave with longing eyes. I returned to my work, but soon my head began to split and my skin to burn. I lay with raging fever on me for two or three days till the native apothecary suggested that I should go to Calcutta for treatment, as he could do no more for me. I bundled my things together and crawled down to my boat in a dressing-gown, in the burning sun. I reached Calcutta next morning, and drove to Dr. Charles's house, who insisted on taking me in. Oh! the relief of a cool room and someone to look after me! I was having a severe bout of jungle fever, the result, probably, of bathing at Parasnāth.

The Charleses were most kind and nursed me for some weeks till I was quite right. Sir A. Eden had also taken compassion upon me and transferred me to Gaya, so that there was no return to the lonely Diamond Harbour, with its creek and cemetery and two brick buildings, its brackish water and litigious inhabitants.

## CHAPTER VIII

1877-78

### GAYA AND BETTIAH

IN May I went up country. I relished the honest, dry heat. At Bankipur I stayed with the Mangles—he was then Opium Agent. From Bankipur I travelled all one hot night in a palki, with a torch flaring and stinking, and the bearers keeping up their refrain, and reached the rocky Gaya hills well on the next day.

I relished the change to the romantic hills, the quaint old Hindu city with its ancient streets running up to the Bishnupad Temple, the camels and the baking heat. This seemed the real India. The collector, a feeble creature with a nice Irish wife, put me up. We had our beds right out in the open at night. I had two days' camping in the intense heat with A. (afterwards a leper), when we went after deer on elephants. We also tried to approach the herds of antelope grazing on the stubble fields, only getting one or two heads. Bodh Gaya, the temple built to mark the spot where Buddha preached, with the ancient peepul-tree projecting, under which he sat, was a wonderful resort. It was approached by an undulating sandy road, flanked by palms and old banyan-trees. There was something in the physical features of the country—the Palestine of Buddhism—that seemed to mark it as the field for the ministry of the great teacher. There are rocky hills with weird shapes, which are full of Buddhist relics and remains of Buddhist monasteries. The soil is in part fertile and smiling, in part very unproductive.

But I had little more than a month to study this interesting district, where I would have been well content to



stay. I found myself transferred to Bettiah, an indigo district north of the Ganges. I made the return palki journey to Bankipur, and thence went by rail to Mozufferpur, the great indigo centre. I was entertained by Worsley, the collector, a tall, grave man with a long beard, a man of great character, who knew the whole Greek Testament by heart. The house was full of planters who had come for a meeting to inaugurate reforms which Worsley had much at heart. Later on Worsley died, when commissioner of Dacca, of cholera.

From Mozufferpur I drove sixty miles to Motihāri with a Bengal cavalry subaltern on his way to join his regiment at Segowli. The dâks had been "laid" by planters; at every four miles was a fresh gaunt waler with some peculiarity of jibbing or backing or plunging. We stayed one night at a palatial indigo bungalow, and were entertained by the planter with indigo stories and mutiny reminiscences.

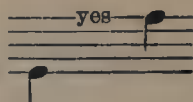
The Motihāri collector has a charming bungalow on a lake, set in a compound with noble trees. Here I stayed a few days and made acquaintance with the residents—notably Alick Knyvett who became a great friend, then a young and very keen policeman. There was an opinionated judge, a local hero who laid down the law, and every one of whose opinions I felt inclined to traverse.

From Motihāri to Bettiah I drove thirty miles through the Chumpārūn district, very prettily wooded, with the indigo growing everywhere. At Bettiah I relieved a young Irish civilian whose early years were signalised by anonymous pamphleteering. On retirement he became an M.P. for a short while, a job for which he was better fitted than for that of a magistrate in an Indian district.

Bettiah was a pretty place. There were fine stone temples, a quaint native town and woods. The Maharajah of Bettiah, of an old and wealthy family, who owned most of the district, lived in a ramshackle palace. He was a Hindu Rajah of the old school, lean and brown, with a charming manner. As he talked to you he would draw

up his bare slippered foot and caress it. He gave away everything to the Brahmins and dancing-girls. An English manager looked after his property, and endeavoured to keep his borrowing propensities in check. But in my time the managership was filled by an unscrupulous Eurasian pleader, who was foremost in plundering the estate. The place was a hotbed of intrigue and corruption and bribery, like many another big native's court. The son and heir was the Kooar Sahib, an enormously fat young man with a high, piping voice, who talked

limited English. To everything he said, Oh



He did not like the Irish magistrate. He compared him with a "snake of grass."

The manager had a big, jolly, showy wife, fond of riding and popular with the planters, whom she entertained with profusion. There was also a niece being courted, and, as I was talking to my host on arrival, a dogcart dashed up with two young fellows (like Miss Austen's Bath characters) laughing and joking, to stay with the manager—one to propose, the other to support him. The young lady became engaged, a never-failing subject for arch chaff in the community, and was happily married.

The planter was a wholly new type for me. They were of the class of squireens, small country gentlemen, brought up at local schools, and shipped out early to India, where they became rough, daring, practical colonists, full of round mother-wit. That noble animal, the horse, dominated their lives: in his stable, ■ a racer, or polo pony, or trapper, or pig-sticker, he formed the staple of conversation. They were an honest, resourceful, cheery, happy-go-lucky race. They were great heroes in their own eyes, and about some there was an unpleasing note of excessive self-assertion and bravado. But, on the whole, they were ■ class whose energy, resource and cheeriness in trying circumstances compelled respect. They had all the qualities that make the English colonist the best in the world.

To Paddy Hudson I took a special fancy. He had real Irish wit, and his good things used to come out with the softest voice and the most humorous twinkle of his wild, prominent eyes. He was an excellent judge of character, and nobody could resist him and his blarney. His spirits were infectious, and there was never dullness when he was present. He and his brother Rowland were splendid horsemen, well known at Galway hunts and steeplechases. I was often at Paddy's factory, where he struggled against fever and bad seasons. Among other things he was very musical. Paddy became Sir William, with many irons in the fire.

Jimmy Macleod was another great king, a swarthy, Spanish-looking, hard-featured Isle of Skye man, with a tremendous deep Scottish accent. He had broken every bone in his body, and kept about fifty horses in his stable.

Life at the factory would begin very early with a long ride round the cultivation, varied with a gallop after jackal, till the sun was straight overhead. Then followed a bath and a very heavy breakfast with cool beer and whisky pegs. A smoke and game of billiards followed on, till everybody went to bed for a siesta under the flapping punkah. The siesta was succeeded by drive or polo, pegs, another bath, dinner with more beer and whisky, and sitting out in the cool with more pegs. With such a routine, no wonder that the planters presented a sturdy, red-faced appearance, bubbling over with bucolic health, full of strange oaths, and delighting in practical jokes.

Bettiah was a great rendezvous for polo and joviality. There were choruses after dinner round the manager's wife at the piano. Everyone was known by his nickname, Paddy, Jimmy, Rowley, the Infant, the Exquisite. The last was a man by birth half French, who filled his house with china, was a *chef* himself, and designed ladies' dresses. He retired pretty soon. The planter was in his special glory at Station Meets, gatherings for dancing, polo, racing and general frivolity.

As a magistrate I had difficult questions to solve. One

night, after a big dinner, when they all drove off, Paddy drove over an old man in the bazaar. They brought him back in the cart, a poor old scared creature, and we did our best for him; but he died. The family was compensated, but should I have prosecuted Paddy for careless driving? He was a splendid whip, but driving in a bazaar needs special caution, and there is no *prima facie* legal excuse for running over a man in the dark.

Bettiah lies under the Himalayas, and day after day in the clear weather in the rains the magnificent snowy range stood outlined, pink and unsubstantial, against the sky. I had to go out one rainy day to an inaccessible place to inquire into a case of arson. The only way was by palki, but I had picked up Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas*, and was perfectly happy inside as the bearers slithered and slipped along, and though the roof began to leak. It grew late, we missed the way, but I went on with *Uncle Silas*. At last I had to stay the night at a rude police station where I got a native curry cooked for me, and continued reading *Uncle Silas* by the light of a smoking oil wick half the night till I had finished it. It cleared up the next day, and I did my business.

The cold weather had begun, and I had done some real camping for the first time when I was surprised to get orders to go to Kalimpong in the Darjeeling District. I said good-bye to my planter friends, sent my things straight to Darjeeling on bullock-carts in charge of my bearer, while I repaired to Calcutta to have a little breathing space. The appointment was a friendly action on the part of Sir Ashley Eden. I got no less than forty-four days' "joining time" to travel from Bettiah to Kalimpong, all of which I spent in Calcutta in the cold weather of 1877-78. There was a good Italian opera. My old friends, the Bayleys, had me to stay with them at their bungalow on the banks of the river at Barrackpore. Carlo Bayley had come out and was also with them. Lord Lytton was Viceroy, and his foreign manners, his cigarettes in the middle of dinner, and his politeness to the ladies



were unjustly cavilled at. I remember standing on the steps of Government House when he arrived one sultry March day in the previous year, with his fine bearded head surmounting his Frenchified frock-coat, trousers and boots. I went one night with the Bayleys to Howrah Station to say good-bye to that fine old soldier, Lord Napier of Magdala, the Commander-in-Chief, who was leaving India for good and was much liked.

At a garden-party at Belvedere I was presented to a jolly fat man with a beard fringing his face, and enormous blue eyes. He had a badly fitting pot-hat and uncouth clothes, and looked like a farmer or a Duke with agricultural tastes. This was Edgar, whose personality impressed itself upon me at once. He gave a hearty laugh and said he had been looking for me, and it was arranged that we should go up to Darjeeling together.

## CHAPTER IX

1878

### KALIMPONG

*February 20.*—This morning, my Peggy, we have passed Aden. The sky is overcast, and the sea dull, flecked with white waves ; the hard outline of the Arabian mountains looms in the distance.

I travelled with Edgar to Sahibagnj, where we crossed the Ganges to Caragola Ghat. There we got into “dāk garis” for about a hundred miles to Siliguri, with relays of ponies. Edgar’s camp was near the station in the broken Terai country ; the low ranges of hills only appeared, the rest was shrouded in mist.

Edgar was alarming but friendly, and he at once struck me as the most original and forcible person that I had come across in India. He had long meditative silences, but when he began to talk he warmed up to his subject, his eyes winked and gleamed, he had explosions of laughter, and he carried one away with him. He made one feel that everything around him was of the greatest importance. His egotism was amusing. Calcutta society, he said, was fourth-rate, Darjeeling first-rate. Who did he see at Darjeeling ? I ventured to ask later. Answer—nobody. I was much impressed at the inference.

He looked more like the northern farmer than ever among his attendant hill orderlies. His cuisine was delicious. He was a real and first-rate *gourmet*, and would make delicious salad dressings with his own hands.

It was arranged that I should precede him to Darjeeling.

He lent me ponies to ride up, and I shall never forget the glories of the road, the dense Terai forest and creepers, the woods hanging over the road, the deep valleys and great mountain slopes, the view over the plains. The November day was cold and bracing, and I felt in great spirits. I met a bearded, smiling man riding down, who said, "Are you Ritchie?" This was Alfred Wallis Paul. I spent the night at Kurseong at the Clarendon, then an old-fashioned hostelry with a jolly landlady. I reached Darjeeling the next day, and went first to Paul's, and then to Ada Villa, Edgar's house. Soon Edgar arrived, and the Lewins (who were succeeding him as Deputy Commissioner) and we had a pleasant party. Lewin I had met at home and liked much for his geniality and humour. He had been through the Mutiny, and, after joining the Civil Department, he became a great man in the Lushai wilds, where he went about in native clothes and lived with the tribesmen. They called him Tongilula, or some such name, for his good stories. He was a brother of Terriss, the actor, and had something theatrical about him. Mrs. Lewin had just come out, refreshingly English. Everything was new and interesting.

After a fortnight's stay, during which I received my instructions, I left for Kalimpong. The journey was as fascinating as the ascent to Darjeeling. There was a long descent of 6,000 feet to the Balasan Valley, past the smiling tea-gardens and through tall forests. The day grew warmer and warmer till, at the bottom, one was in the tropics again, with cicadas and tree-beetles shrilling. Then the road lay for eight miles through forest along the river-bank looking over the broad, roaring torrent, the deep, green pools and boulders. The banks rise steep on either side, clothed in magnificent forests. Each vista, as it opened, seemed more beautiful than the one before. Presently the Balasan was joined by the Teesta—a lovely waters-meet, and the broad stream ran in and out of the folds of the mountains—turning blue and purple in the evening light. The Teesta was crossed by a cane sus-

pension bridge; the ponies made a precarious crossing in boats. The hill-side up to Kalimpong, after one emerges from the forest, was beautifully cultivated with terraced rice-fields and fruit-trees standing round comfortable homesteads. The view of the snows was not as extensive as from Darjeeling, as Kalimpong is much lower, but it was beautiful. On the north side one looked down precipitous slopes to the Teesta Valley; on the south the eye rejoiced in the sight of the happy valley, the gentle slopes, the check-work of cultivation, and all the signs of happy, useful toil.

Kalimpong, or the district east of the Teesta, had only been annexed eleven years before from Bhutan (1866), and no officer before me had been regularly stationed here since the annexation. I had to make arrangements for a land settlement, and to recommend tracts for forest and tea reserves and for native cultivation. I took a great fancy to the hill-people, the jolly, burly Bhootias, the mild-eyed, sallow Lepchas, the shrewd, enterprising Nepalese. Everything was primitive and different from the plains. The hill-men were simple and manly: they would laugh and eat with you, their women did not cower behind their veils when they saw you, but had bony and homely faces, and a laugh in them, too. The Tehsildār, Gelong, was a tall, Chinese-looking man; his wife, the Subāhni, richly decked with silver and turquoise ornaments, was all affability and smiles, and entertained me with flour tea and *murwa*, a sort of weak cider.

A devoted pioneer Scottish missionary, Macfarlane, allowed me to occupy his shanty, behind which a school were perpetually chanting the Tibetan alphabet, Ka, Ke, Ko, Ki. I had an interpreter called Luddy, a mission convert, with a mild Scottish accent. I insisted on his casting away his billycock and seedy European clothes, and dressing himself in his national Lepcha costume. One night, as I was smoking a solitary pipe after dinner, the door was flung open, and there appeared a strange figure bristling with hammers and impedimenta, who demanded in guttural German accents if this was a rest-*häus*. To my



inquiring who he was, he said, "I am a geologist from Buda-Pesth on my way to the Jelep Lā."<sup>1</sup> I made him welcome, and said that I was also going to the pass and he had better come with me as my guest. He belonged to a Hungarian scientific party passing through India on their way to China and Tibet under Count Czechĕin. Loëze proved a pleasant companion. The Jelep is a pass into Tibet, and the road commanded views of extraordinary beauty. I particularly remember one view where one's eye could rove from the bottom of the Teesta Valley below, right up to the summit of Kinchinjunga, oneself standing about half-way between the two extremes of 28,000 and 1,000 feet. Soon after 10,000 feet the road was under snow. Loëze and I, dressed in all our clothes for warmth, huddled together at night in a broken-down shed with icicles hanging about. The knolls on the route near the pass were covered with cairns of stones and bright-coloured flags and offerings. Picturesque caravans of Tibetans came toiling through the snow with wool on pack-ponies, and raised the cry of "Om mani padmi om" ("Oh, the jewel in the lotus!") as they attained each of these stations. The women had their faces and eyelids smeared with a sort of brownish-yellow paint—a protection against snow-burning. The men were jolly-looking Tartar fellows. I liked to see them tearing down hill, astride a pony, with a drove of shaggy ponies trotting before them, which they directed with their cries.

After saying good-bye to Loëze and receiving a warm invitation to Buda-Pesth,<sup>2</sup> I explored my new district thoroughly in tents, being accompanied, part of the time, by a European forest officer. It was hard, rough work; one was devoured by leeches and a detestable gnat—the "pipsy"—which raised little poisoned pustules. It rained incessantly. For two or three days our track lay through a

<sup>1</sup> Lā = pass. The Jelep Lā is 15,000 feet, the chief pass into Tibet.

<sup>2</sup> This invitation was renewed the year before the war. Loëze had become Professor at Buda-Pesth, and retained grateful recollections of my hospitality.

strip of virgin mountain forest, and the coolies ran out of food and had to live on jungle products. I went over the Rishi Lā to the Jaldokhā River and from there to Daling by the dense forest at the foot of the hills, which is now covered by the Dooar's tea-gardens, and where we saw fresh pad-marks of tigers. I explored the Mo-chu and the other valleys running down to the plains, and selected a site for a sanatorium for the Dooar's planters on a ridge where there was water, and which could become easily accessible from the plains when civilisation had advanced and cleared the jungles. But that day has not yet arrived. I bathed in the mountain streams and enjoyed the hardy life. Among many glorious views of that time that live in my recollections that of Fort Daling stands pre-eminent. It was an old Bhutia fort and suggested the castle of the Sleeping Beauty. On all sides were forests as far as the eye could see—the plain below was one great forest, the hills and valleys all round were unbroken sweeps of greenwood.

My coolies with their kookries were very handy fellows, always jolly; they would rig up leafy tabernacles for themselves and my ponies at night. On one occasion, when a part of the river-bank along which we were marching proved to be abruptly cut away—and to go up the mountain-side and down again would have involved a long detour—they ingeniously constructed a gallery of tree branches in the precipitous river-bank, along which we all passed. The rain, which began in March, was a great nuisance. One night I camped on the pebbly beach of a stream, when a storm came on, and all night long I heard the water of the torrent getting nearer and nearer as it rose. At morning the stream had risen to within a few inches of my tent.

At Kalimpong I built myself a house on the most lovely site that I could find, and laid out a garden. I arranged for every detail of the building, from cutting the trees for the woodwork and shingles to baking the bricks and buying glass and door-bolts: and was as proud as Robinson Crusoe when I got into it in July, the walls literally running down with wet. For we were in the height of the rains,

and there was nothing to be done after I had completed my reports. I proposed to go home on privilege leave, but a difficulty arose in communicating with Darjeeling. The cane bridge got carried away by the Teesta in flood, and I could only get letters across by means of attaching them to an arrow that was shot across.

My leave was not granted, and I was called into Darjeeling to work there. I lived in a boarding-house with a lot of young engineers, who were building the Northern Bengal Railway, and were recessing in Darjeeling. I rather enjoyed the return to civilisation. I was impressed for private theatricals and acted with Miss J. There was the usual hill-station "round of gaieties" which I laughed at with Mrs. Lewin. One day I took a party over to see Kalimpong for two days, but I got a bad chill, and was unable to return with them. I was much worse than I thought, and with great difficulty managed to crawl up the opposite hill-side to Munro's tea-garden at Peshok. Munro was a rough man of the Scottish gardener class, but he proved a veritable good Samaritan and tended me with the greatest kindness and sympathy, for which I have always felt grateful. I was carried into Darjeeling after a week, and began to go about, when I had a new and very sharp attack. This internal inflammation caused me considerable suffering and depression and laid me up for many weeks. The doctor told me I ought to give up Darjeeling, and, like an idiot, I took his advice and applied for leave and a transfer to the plains. The mischief all came about through my not knowing how to take care of myself, exposing myself to chills, etc., and paying no attention to diet in that treacherous climate, where one is bathed in perspiration in the valleys, to be chilled when one reaches the ridge summit in the evening.

So my Darjeeling time came to an end within a year. I have been there much since, and it is *the* place in India to which my heart clings. The scenery grows upon one, and never palls. Before I left in November that divine time at the close of the rains had come, when distance seems

annihilated in the pellucid air and the mountains stand out in their fullest glory. There is the stupendous mass of precipices and ice-falls, Jannu, Kabru, Kinchinjunga, Pandim, Narsing in front, continued through a large segment of the horizon by distant snowy peaks—the first of the three great barriers that separate us from the mysterious land of Tibet. Shoulder after shoulder of blue mountain rises up to be lost in a haze out of which the soaring snow-peaks rise. Then there are the indescribably grand cloud effects and sunrises and sunsets. Sometimes in the rains one looks up, and, far above the conglomeration of angry clouds and mists, the virgin peak of Kinchinjunga is seen in the serene azure. But how hopeless to try to describe the rare beauty of that high mountain-land! It always appealed to me strongly, and I count it good fortune that my family and myself have enjoyed so much of it. Without its associations India would be but a dreary recollection.

In the winter of 1878–9 I ran home for six weeks. I came straight by the mail from Brindisi. What a delight it was to see Europe and civilisation again! I felt like a barbarian after my three years' absence. It was bitter in North Italy, and we had a morning at Bologna under snow. It was like looking at a mediæval picture to see the Italians all wrapped up, briskly moving about the arcades. At Paris I narrowly missed the steamer train. I was late, having to cross from one *gare* to another and get my dinner, and the train was just starting; but I evaded all the officials, who ran to stop me, and leapt into a *coupé* carriage. I reached Victoria in the grey of the morning, and fell into the arms of my family on the platform.

We had a house in Queen's Gate. The fatted calf was killed for me; I was made much of, and it was all very delightful. I took the nephews and nieces and all the cousins in a 'bus to *The Babes in the Wood* at Drury Lane. My sister-in-law, Lady Ritchie, had an entertainment at the grill-room at the South Kensington Museum to which Mr. Huxley and Mr. Lecky came. I remember



Huxley discussing Carlyle. Though he differed from him on every article of his creed, he still felt that Carlyle was a very great man indeed. Huxley knew much about Darjeeling from Sir Joseph Hooker.

The pleasant days came to an end much too quick. I remember little white-haired Gerry calling out to me, cheerfully, "Good-bye for five years!" A brother and sister accompanied me on my way as far as Paris. The holiday was over, and I set my face again to India and work.

## CHAPTER X

1879

### SASSERAM

PEG, on whom I hang these homely but veracious recollections, understand that my journey to Brindisi in January, 1879, to join the steamer, was a dreary one. The delightful holiday had come to an end all too quickly, and on the last day in Paris, as I watched the crowds and the bustle and the life, I made comparisons with *The Cycle of Cathay*. The Brindisi railway runs close to the sad sea-waves for long distances, and they seemed to re-echo my thoughts.

It was a fine warm night at Brindisi, and I sat up watching the lights from the steamer till just before we started at dawn. I noticed two officers on the deck walking up and down, in anxious and earnest conversation. They were rejoining their Highland regiment on the outbreak of the Afghan War. One of them was Major White, still a senior regimental major, who was to win his laurels in Afghanistan and Burmah, become Commander-in-Chief, and the hero of Ladysmith. There was also on board the young Cooch Behar Rajah, returning from his first European tour, a nice bright young fellow in those days.

I was posted to Sasseram in Behar, and on my way across from Bombay I stopped at Nandgaon in the middle of the night, and had a long *tonga* drive the whole of the next day of about fifty miles to the caves of Ellora. It was a dreary enough journey towards an ever-receding low range of hills, and the rest-house was of the most primitive. But the caves were extraordinarily interesting. Imagine the hill-side for about half a mile excavated into caves in which

the Hindu imagination had run riot with carvings of the gods and all the legends of their monstrous mythology. There was an approach to classical grace in some of the figures, but for the most part they were debased and grotesque—fit emblems of latter-day Brahminism. On a hill near was the fine and simple tomb of the Moghul Emperor Jehangir, who died on one of his Deccan expeditions. We were just within the Nizam's territory.

Sasseram was in Shahabad (headquarters Arrah) and I was glad to find Edgar as my collector. I took over charge from a country-bred deputy-magistrate, who had a large and grubby family. Sasseram is an ancient and decaying Mahommedan town at the foot of the Kymore hills, and was, at that time, very much cut off from everywhere, being sixty miles from a railway station. The town was prettily situated about two miles from the Kymore hills; it had for a short time been the capital of the usurping Afghan Emperor Shēr Shāh, who had defeated Humāyun. Shēr Shāh was buried in a noble mausoleum situated in the middle of a tank. His tomb became a favourite resort of mine: there was a beautiful echo under its dome and a fine view from the top, round which the green parrots flew incessantly. Many old tombs were scattered about the plain. The city was a collection of narrow lanes in which still lived the descendants of the courtiers of more than three hundred years before. The Grand Trunk road, with its noble avenue of trees, ran through the town and district.

Twelve miles from Sasseram was Dehri on the Soane, a prettily planted little engineering station. Here a great *anicut*, or barrage, across the Soane (some miles wide) diverted waters of the river into a canal system with ramifications all over the district. The main canals were a pretty feature of the country, with their well-planted banks along which one could drive, and long reaches of water. European canal officers—young fellows from Cooper's Hill—were dotted about at long intervals; the distributaries extended everywhere; the canal system was comparatively new and its administration was interesting.

At Dehri there was a little mild social life which I was glad to take advantage of, for it was necessary to see some one of one's own race. I had two fine walers, Trots and Sailor, whom I exercised a great deal in acquainting myself with my district. The hot weather came on apace soon after I arrived, and Sasseram was a notoriously hot place, with a midday shade temperature of between 100° and 110° for days on end. Everything in the town was very dirty, and bad cholera broke out.

Edgar came to stay and inspect for a week at the hottest time. I remember my *khansamah*, who was anxious to please, bringing in a flaming plum-pudding with pride one panting night. There was a Mahommedan charitable endowment. It was deemed politic to restore the mutawālī-ship, or office of abbot, and Edgar and I solemnly installed Shah Mohiuddin, a little, wizened, wicked-looking Mahommedan, on to the throne, or *guddi*. Edgar was very pompous over the ceremony, while I could hardly keep my countenance and was rebuked for my levity. I travelled back in the heat with Edgar to Arrah. At the close of a long hot day he would sit out and read Shakespeare to himself.

The rains came on and the country became green and more bearable. Within reach of me flourished a great character, Charlie Davies. He was an old gentleman born and bred in the country, reaching the age of seventy, and a bachelor. The end and aim of his being was books and self-culture; he had just sufficient means to live comfortably and to stock an extremely well-selected library. Mr. Davies lived at Akbārpore at the foot of the precipices of the Rhotās plateau, where it juts out like a promontory into the Soane. To reach the plateau you toil up some eight hundred feet by a precipitous path, and, arrived on the top, you find yourself in a sort of Jack and the Beanstalk's country, covered with woods, but with no sign of human habitation. In the middle of the greenery you come upon a magnificent deserted palace, built on the model of the great Moghul palaces of Delhi and Agra.



There was the Naubat-Khāna, or entrance arch and gates, from the summit of which the kettledrums used to speak at sunrise. Within were the halls of public and private audience, the Diwān-i-ām and Diwān-i-khās, the ranges of rooms, the female apartments, and the baths surrounding two quadrangles. It is a converted Hindu building, the Mahommedan style being grafted on the solid square Hindu carving.

Nowhere do you get more flaming sunsets in the rains than from Rhotas over the Soane Valley and towards the Gaya hills. Waterfalls leap over the craggy sides of the peninsula. The site was selected for purposes of defence, and was practically impregnable.

Mr. Davies seemed part and parcel of Rhotas, where he had lived for years. Sir Joseph Hooker had found him there in 1849, and has noticed his accurate information about the flora.

I remember well my first visit to Mr. Davies in the rains. I had ridden some twenty miles from Dehri along a smiling strip of country between the river and the hills, and arrived late among the barking of a pack of great pariah dogs which Mr. Davies kept for his protection. The old gentleman was sitting with a volume on the table behind the green-shaded lamp in his library. He was short and clean-shaven: he had a fine brow, an aquiline beak, sparkling black eyes, and his hair was still black. His countenance was perpetually lighted by smiles and vivacity as he held forth on his pet subjects. And how he did discourse! It was a never-failing stream of the most beautifully turned sentences in modulated accents accompanied by speaking gestures. Exquisitely courteous and old-fashioned was his manner. Edgar used to declare that he must be a scion of some fallen branch of a royal house. He wore frock-coats of nankin and rarely stirred out of his house. He retained all that he read, and had a wonderful store of information on every subject. He was entirely self-educated, and had taught himself German and other languages. Every month brought him a great box

of the newest books. He would astonish the common herd by displaying an intimate acquaintance with the topography and streets of London, where, of course, he had never been. His unflagging enthusiasm for literature and culture was remarkable, and resembled that of a young man whose mind is opening. He was perfectly serene and content. "Dear old Matthew Arnold," he would say, with a laugh.

I paid him frequent visits and delighted in his stimulating company. In the cold weather he accompanied us to Rhotas palace, and I have a vision of him standing on the highest turret, bareheaded, with his head thrown up to catch the breeze, discussing the past glories of the palace, how he had seen a royal Bengal tiger standing in the quadrangle, and of the British troops quartered there in the Mutiny.

One cold weather morning at Sasseram I got news that a man-eating tiger had come down close to the town and had been marked down in a patch of cultivation. I drove to the place, an extensive grove of palms under a black rocky hill, to find an enormous crowd of natives assembled, with the report that the tiger was in a small patch of *rahar*, or beans, which was indicated. I gave a gun to my Indian Police Inspector, keeping my rifle, and, lying down, I at last saw an unmistakable pair of legs moving among the stalks of the crop about two hundred yards ahead. We fired simultaneously, and immediately there was a low growl and a rustling in the crops and a skedaddle among the villagers at the farther end from where we were standing. The tiger had come out, seized a native by the arm and mauled him, and gone back again to the cover. I rushed along in a state of great excitement, loading and firing at where I saw the crop moving, till the tiger came out close to me, some forty yards' distance, roaring, badly wounded, and seeming to rear on his hind legs. I got a steady aim and dropped him dead. The villagers rushed on the fallen tiger with shouts, and belaboured the carcase with their long sticks. I was not a little elated at my good luck, especially when Edgar and Halliday, the commissioner,

arrived the next day, who had heard of the ravages of the man-eater.

The hot weather was coming on, Edgar was leaving, and I made a successful push to get away from the loneliness of Sasseram. I found myself transferred, after a year's stay, to Gopalganj in the indigo district of Chupra, where I should at least be near my friend Tobin, who was in charge of the neighbouring sub-division of Sewān.

## CHAPTER XI

1880-81

### GOPALGANJ AND CHUPRA

ANTHONY PATRICK MACDONNELL, the collector of Chupra, was a notable figure. He belonged to the little group of Irishmen who were coming out to India under the competitive system, and whose ideas of tenant right were beginning to have influence. A. P. (as we always called him) had been marked out as a promising boy, and had been well educated. He was a Roman Catholic, and at one of the Queen's Colleges he made a reputation as a speaker and had as his associates men who have since become prominent Nationalists. Irish Home Rule was then in the air, and we had many discussions about it: it always found a vigorous advocate in A. P. His countenance had a great look of intelligence and sympathy when he was discussing a subject in which he was interested, and there was a fire in the sharp little eyes. His interest in the people and all administrative questions was unbounded, and he was a most stimulating officer to work under. He took no exercise, and was perpetually working at writing masterly reports.

He had recently come from England, and his newly married wife and child were to join him. His special line in district work was to protect the raiyats against the planters and to see that their rights were recognised and enforced. The system under which indigo was grown was a questionable one; but this was not the fault of the planters so much as of the Indian character and economy which led to its adoption. For, if every system in India that could not



be justified were to be condemned, I do not know who would escape whipping. The planters need indigo to be grown—that is, the green crop from which indigo has to be pressed—and to secure this they had to take up the position of zamindārs or superior landlords. In this way alone could they get the necessary influence and authority to push forward the indigo cultivation. If the raiyats had chosen to stand up and assert their rights, there was no legal power to compel them to grow indigo; but the Behar cultivator was not built that way; the raiyats were unable to combine; the zamindars and upper class Indians were enlisted on the planters' side. The raiyat had to cultivate the indigo crop, each man putting a certain proportion of his land under indigo and receiving a price which did not remunerate him better than if he had grown other crops. He intensely disliked the constant supervision and interference which this cultivation entailed. Their antipathy to the factory interference was so great that I believe, if their own wishes alone had been consulted, no price would have tempted the raiyats to grow indigo. They preferred to grow the edible crops according to their immemorial custom. On the other hand, they were treated fairly in the matter of rent—provided that they were docile about cultivation, and were probably better off in many respects under the planters than under their own landlords. But the mischief was that, though the planters themselves were good-hearted enough, their native underlings were insufficiently controlled and did great oppression: just as the police do under the best-intentioned magistrates. The class of overseers and writers have oppressed the cultivators in India from time immemorial, but what made the system specially objectionable was that these practices were carried on in the name of Englishmen holding the position of proprietors. The question is a difficult one, and I will not enlarge further upon it. A. P. opened the eyes of his subordinates, and especially of Tobin and myself, to our responsibilities and duties, and we investigated with great care all indigo complaints, and dealt severely with

offenders. We felt that it was fairer to keep our social relations with the planters distant, and I was much less intimate with them than in Champaran.

The Chupra collector had a beautiful house and compound with a fine avenue of cork-trees running down to the high bank that looked over the *diāra*, or alluvial soil of the Ganges. After staying with A. P. at Chupra, I went on to Tobin at Sewān. Tobin had married since Calcutta days, and his wife had presented him with twins. His energy and delight in his work were unbounded and were good to see. He scoured the country in every direction and figured as a sort of general knight-errant, trying to remedy abuses, and, like all young knights-errant, over-doing his job. The amiable and philanthropic Tytler, an opium official, also lived at Sewān. I never met anybody in India who had a stronger feeling for the natives than Tytler: he was really and truly a *ma-bap*<sup>1</sup> to them. He knew their patois as one of themselves, and sympathised with them in all their troubles. He supported many blind and infirm people, and never turned away beggars or applicants for assistance. Over thirty years he spent at Sewān and incurred much obloquy with the planters for championing the cause of the natives; but no social unpopularity, or even boycotting, ever caused him to swerve from the path in which he felt his duty lay. The natives never had a better friend; he tolerated their failings and weaknesses and saw all that was good in them. The hardship of their lot appealed to him deeply; he was interested in their customs and their ways. I have never met a man who carried into practice more faithfully the precepts of Christianity. He was an ardent gardener, and kept his lawn of an emerald green in the hottest weather. He had a simple, child-like nature, and was broad-minded in religious matters. He was a close observer and great lover of nature. Gopalganj was eighteen miles from Sewān, but it was pleasant to have two such men as Tobin and Tytler to talk with, and I rode over almost every Sunday to pay them a visit.

<sup>1</sup> Father and mother.

Gopalganj itself was simply a little village in the middle of prettily wooded country. There was no big river or hill as a foreground. I gave my horses a great deal of work, and rode long distances on inspection or inquiry, trying to emulate Tobin.

Hutwā, where the Maharajah lived, was half-way between Gopalganj and Sewān. The Maharajah was a pleasant young man with an ingenuous face like a full moon. He kept a bungalow for Europeans, with a good collection of novels, where I sometimes stayed and read Disraeli's books. A. P. and Edgar (who was acting as commissioner) paid me a visit in the rains. Paddy Hudson came round as Secretary of the Planters' Association. There were frequent drives with jibbing horses on the long forty-mile road between Sewān and Chupra. I spent my *poojas* (or autumn holidays of ten days) under the hospitable roof of Skip Tayler, the Judge of Suri, who delighted in giving big house-parties, and collecting young men and maidens. There would be a round of games and expeditions and dancing. He was a fine old Anglo-Indian of the old school.

The cold season of 1880 was ■ memorable one to me, and ■ turning-point altogether, as it brought out my sister to share my life for a year. She thoroughly entered into the spirit of my Indian life, and was full of appreciation for the beauties and interest of the country. I went to meet her at Allahabad when she arrived. We stopped at Benares; drove out to Sarnāth, the impressive Buddhist stupa, or masonry mound for preserving ■ relic, and saw together "the orange sunset waning slow" of the cold weather. My sister's enchantment over the Benares crowd, thronging the courts and re-echoing narrow streets, the strange Hindu ritual and presenting of flowers, the stately forms of the women carrying on their heads their water-jars, was delightful to see. The pleasure in Indian life was increased indefinitely with such a companion to see everything with, and to talk to on every subject. Other people had the same feeling. A. P. forgot to sigh, and

expanded in his most statesmanlike manner. Tobin was enchanted to have a sympathetic listener for his benevolent projects. John Whitmore was at Chupra, lame for life after his bad driving accident, and I began my friendship with him then. We spent the cold weather in camp, combining a good deal with the Tobins and the MacDonnells.

The hot weather came on and our little bungalow resounded with my sister's piano, which was none the worse for its transit of sixty miles in a bullock-cart. We had a key made by a local blacksmith and kept the instrument in fair tune. My sister practised during the long, hot afternoons, and read assiduously when the house was shut up and the duststorms raged outside. She managed to get through *Paradise Lost* under these adverse circumstances. Edgar came over for a visit and listened to the music. He and my sister discussed everything, from the early Fathers to current politics.

With the rains came changes. MacDonnell was transferred to Calcutta, and his official merits were recognised. He drafted and got passed the Bengal Tenancy Act, one of the most important pieces of legislation ever enacted in India. He became appreciated by Lord Dufferin, and had a career of unparalleled success as Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, Member of Council, Lieutenant-Governor of the Upper Provinces, and the most successful of famine administrators. Of his subsequent career it is unnecessary to speak.

Tobin got a district, and to take his place at Sēwān there arrived George Kenneth Lyon, a handsome, fair-haired young fellow with a singular grace of expression and manner. He had been at Winchester with me, where I had known him only slightly. From the first he became fast friends with my sister and myself. He was musical, fond of books, full of *bonhomie* and popular with everybody.

We ourselves were transferred to Chupra. The Quinns had succeeded the MacDonnells. Quinn was a very genial, hearty good fellow, with a pretty, smiling little wife. The



judge was John Foster Stevens, who played the violin, and who used to foregather with my sister over music. The station life was pleasant; there was much tennis, and sitting under the trees in the collector's compound, and sociable dinner parties. In the *poojas* I took my sister to see my old haunts, Gāya and the Bodh Gāya temple, then to Dehri by canal boat, and Rhotas with a visit to the sage, Charlie Davies.

We went to the Quinns' camp at Sonapore—I must describe this great institution to you ■ little, Peggy. After the long, dreary hot weather and rains are over, all the Behar people have a great social rendezvous at the scene of the famous native religious fair—the junction of the Gunduck with the Ganges, where pious Hindus go to bathe. There, in a seemingly limitless grove of mango-trees, are the various camps, each with its big tent for dining, and open *shamiāna*, or pavilion fitted up as a drawing-room. On each side are ranged the tents for bed-rooms. There is a race-course, and ■ single building which serves as a grand-stand and ball-room. For a whole week an uninterrupted round of dissipation goes on : there are races in the morning, games and polo in the afternoon, dances at night till the small hours; driving and riding round the course and in the adjoining country; visits to the crowded native fair, with its rows of elephants and horses for sale, its interminable streets of booths; and the great bathing festival at the time of full moon.

In November one is at the beginning and perhaps the most perfect time of the cold weather, when no wind is stirring, and to be out all day in the chequered shade of the trees is delightful. The moonlight nights are not too cold, and couples drive round the course between the dances. It is a sort of Saturnalia, when chaperones allow much liberty to their young ladies, so that a young bachelor may dance and drive and ride with them and escort them on an elephant through the fair to his heart's content. The day opens with a gun at sunrise, and the band passing round the camps playing a merry march. On Sunday

nights there is a big bonfire, round which everybody sits while the band plays sacred music. In this setting, is it little wonder that the young civilian's fancies lightly turn to thoughts of love ? My friends, Edward Collin, Harry Lee, George Lyon and Philip Nolan all met their fates at Sonapore. Lyon fell desperately in love at this particular Sonapore camp. We drove him back to Chupra through the smiling cold weather crops, sighing his life out, and raving over the charms of his mistress. He liked having us for confidants. We urged him to try his chance by letter, and great was his rapture at being accepted.

## CHAPTER XII

1881-82

### CALCUTTA AND ROORKEE

AT Sonapore I heard that I was transferred to Calcutta again. And we also heard from the young lady, who in time was to become your mummy, who had just landed and who wrote us charming letters describing her journey and first impressions of Roorkee.

On leaving Chupra my sister and I took leave to see the up-country cities, and proposed to wind up at Roorkee before joining at Calcutta. We had some days at Agra, visiting the Taj, the Fort, Futtehpoore Sikri and Akbar's tomb at Secundra. The beauty of the Moghul architecture, with its historical associations, was a revelation.

[*February 22.*—To-day we are in the Gulf of Suez, the sea of an indigo blue, and the waves merrily dancing, the wind catching and blowing the spray; on either side are the brown, sandy bluffs. A bitter cold north wind is blowing, but the sunshine is bright, and you children, who have just put on your winter clothes, are in great spirits. There is the true Egyptian colouring in the shadows of the mountains of the desert, and their pink tints against the deep blue of the sea and the light blue of the sky.]

From Agra we went to Roorkee in mid-December, 1881, where the cold of the North-West was keen and bracing, and there was a smell of mountain pine from the furniture in the houses. After a long drive from Sahārunpore station, we alighted before dinner at a classical-looking

building, and were welcomed by the colonel, your grandfather, and—and by a dear little comfortable damsel of eighteen, in a grey woollen dress, whom we were delighted to see. She had been a very little time in India, and everything was new to her. Her papa was commanding the Sappers, and looked very soldierly in his uniform and on his great charger. Roorkee was nothing if not military; there were soldiers all over the place; gentlemanly, stiff officers were much in evidence.

After a few days at Roorkee we arranged to carry off the little cousin to Mussoorie in the mountains. We drove to Rajpore over the rolling Doon; rode ponies up the hill and found ourselves in wintry weather, but with a glorious clear sky and sunshine in the deserted hill-station of Mussoorie.

Another jaunt did we have to Hurdwar, where the Ganges debouches from the hills, there a clear, shallow stream. The scenery round is of a lovely, quiet order, shut in by hills, and under the hills is a picturesque little old Hindu city. We had great sport on *sirnāis*, or two skins of cattle blown up which support a plank seat. Sitting on these and guided by Neptunes splashing in the water, we shot down the swift current.

It was during these days that I fell in love. On returning from Hurdwar I informed my astonished sister that I was going to propose. So I fired off my bombshell in the garden early one morning. It was very cold: she was much taken back and had to think it over a little, while I retired to my tent. But in the afternoon, when the sun had come out and had warmed up everything, I met a beaming countenance and was accepted. This was nineteen years ago, and yet here's your mummy looking much the same as she did then. She was eighteen and I was twenty-eight when we became engaged.

My sister and I had some more camping near Calcutta, very uncomfortable after Behar, on the banks of the Hoogly, and in a house-boat on the canals of the dreary salt-water lake district. And we had also to go down to Diamond Harbour suddenly, to take charge for a





MARGIE THACKERAY, AFTERWARDS  
MRS. GERALD RITCHIE.



PEGGY RITCHIE AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF HER  
MEDICAL TRAINING.



Eurasian deputy, who had suddenly bolted, oppressed by the loneliness of the place, without leave. My early days there seemed very far away. Then at the beginning of the hot weather my sister had to leave by the *Vega*. The ship was lying at Diamond Harbour, and we went down in a launch; and thus her eventful visit came to an end.

Your mummy and I corresponded daily, but the hot weather dragged slowly till July came round, and I got my three months' leave and started for Roorkee. Everything was very different in the hot, moist, rainy weather from the exhilarating winter of our engagement time. We were married in the evening of a broiling hot day, on July 20, 1882, by the good old German missionary, Mr. Hoppner. Our horses broke down in the long drive to Sahārunpore, but the new moon came out and nothing mattered. We got out and sat by the roadside; occasionally a camel carriage and travellers came by. We had a real hot railway journey to Rawal Pindi. The tonga journey to Murree revived us, and we rested for a few days at that pretty hill station, taking walks among the pines.

## CHAPTER XIII

1882

### CASHMERE

FROM Murree we travelled to Cashmere. How delightful was the first coming to the rest-house on the lower slopes below Murree, and how stiflingly hot was the narrow valley of the Jhelum, which required four marches in those days.

The Vale of Cashmere, as we emerged into it, was disappointing, being covered with hot haze, but we soon got to Gulmurg, the mountain meadow carpeted with flowers, and installed ourselves in a snug log hut for some days, from which we took walks and rides.

From Gulmurg we went to Srinagar, the Venice of the East, with its quaint timber bridges, houses built on piles, avenues of poplars, and encircling rings of hills. We occupied a bungalow, supplied rent free by the hospitable Cashmere State, and made expeditions to the old royal gardens and marble pleasure-houses on the Dal lake, to the carpet merchants and workers in silver and copper, and up the Takht-i-Suleiman, or Solomon's throne, a hill commanding a view of the lake and town, and the many windings of the Jhelum which are said to have suggested the pattern of the Cashmere shawl.

There we hired two country house-boats, one for ourselves, the other for the cook and the boatman's family, and were lazily towed and rowed up the river by the pleasant banks. Our ponies, Millikin and Spillikin, marched along the towpaths, and were ready for us to ride in the evenings. We had a diversion in tents up the Liddar Valley, charmingly pretty with wild fruit-trees



growing in profusion. The homesteads of the Cashmiris are attractive, but the blear-eyed carpet-workers bending over their toil were a sorry sight.

[*Sunday, February 24.*—To-day we are in the Bitter Lakes on the Suez Canal. We lay at Suez from midday yesterday; the greens and blues of the sea, the luminousness of the sky, the white lateen sails skimming along and the sandy mountains make a lovely picture. We entered the canal at night, our electric light casting a dazzling broad beam in front of us that transformed all it touched into a fairy scene. It was an absolutely clear night with Sirius and Orion blazing, and Mars in the middle of the Lion, and a luminous band running round the horizon. It is all beautiful again this morning in the keen desert air. A stately procession of ships has just passed, headed by a huge Japanese ironclad.]

At the head of the Liddar Valley is a sharp snow peak, Mount Haramook, and of this we made the tour with our little tents. It was very cold in the high mountain meadows. At the foot of the mountain we got a good view of the glacier, which breaks off abruptly, the cliffs below it ending in a green mountain tarn.

We returned to Srinagar, and the rain poured for three days, flooding the country. We went up to the huge ruined temple of Martand and then returned by the old Imperial route of the Pir Panjal. The road was rough, and the scenery very broken and grand: at night we stayed in the Moghul *serais*. There was a remarkable comet in the early morning before dawn, which we used to see in our marches at our early starts, when it became hot. We emerged at Guzrāt, and saw the battle-field where Lord Gough defeated the Sikhs. There we rejoined your mother's parents at Mussoorie for a while before returning to work in Bengal.

## CHAPTER XIV

1882-84

### KISHNAGHAR

I FOUND myself posted to Kishnagar in the Nuddea District of Bengal proper. We had a few days in a lent house in Calcutta and then settled down in our new quarters, a large flat-roofed house. Kishnagar proved quite the least interesting of our stations. The climate was damp, the residents very feeble. Whitmore came for a time as judge, and we enjoyed having him. Owing to his chronic invalidism, John Whitmore was known to a comparatively small circle in India. Early in his Indian career, before he attained the age of thirty, he met with a dogcart accident while driving in the Sonthāl Pergannahs with his friend John Borwell, and, owing to the unskilful setting of his thigh, he was rendered practically a cripple for life. He could only walk with the help of crutches, and was subject to constant torment in his hip joint, which condemned him to lie on his couch for the best part of each day. Debarred from exercise of any sort in the trying climate of Bengal, he was constantly a prey to fever and minor depressing ailments. But, in spite of his wretched health and constant suffering, Whitmore was able to stick to his work. Probably no one realised what pluck and determination he brought to bear to enable himself to go through his day's work in Court, year in, year out, and how narrowly, over and over again, he escaped a break-down. And he did his work well—thoroughly and efficiently. A sound lawyer, and full of common sense and sympathy, he made an excellent *mofussil* judge, and his work was admittedly

first class. Before his accident he had been an active subdivisional officer, and thoroughly understood the Indian character. He was an indefatigable reader, a cultured scholar and student of history and literature. "Whitty" by name (as his friends loved to call him) and witty by nature, his cheeriness, humour, breadth of view and outspokenness rendered him a charming companion. A really unkindly word about anybody he seldom spoke, but no one's criticism was more trenchant when occasion required it. Though subject to long bouts of intense depression, inevitable considering his constant suffering, his loneliness in the smallest of stations, and the effects of the tropical climate, to which he was very sensitive, he never betrayed any despondency; and while others were groaning over heat and ennui, Whitmore always presented a courageous front. His hearty laugh, his appreciation of the humours of Anglo-Indian society, his sympathy with the doings of his able-bodied friends, won for him the devotion of his acquaintances. In his way he was a hero—chivalrous, brave and good.

The place was cursed by malaria, and we had not been there very long before our teeth began to chatter and our bodies to be racked by severe ague. It stuck to us for some time. The station was a great C.M.S. missionary centre. There was the Reverend Hall, and Ball and Bell. Others came for Zenana work: a stalwart young woman of gloomy low-church views, but with a passion for horses and riding, who had inevitable rows with her clerical brethren.

We had a Christmas at Neeschindipore with the planter, an old friend of my boyhood, Melville MacNaghten. We had some amusing theatricals with the MacNaghtens, for the benefit of the station, who did not respond to our efforts. One scene was the Screen Scene from *The School for Scandal*, and the only laughter proceeded from the prompter, Melville MacNaghten himself. He has since become a terror to evildoers in the metropolis as a Superintendent of Police.

Lord Ripon had promulgated at this time his sound views on local self-government—his project of giving power and responsibility to local bodies to administer local funds for roads, sanitation, education, etc. There had always been committees for these purposes as consultative bodies to assist the district magistrates, but it was proposed to render the committees independent, to increase their number and to extend the electoral system. The experiment seemed to me to be well worth trying. With my present experience and intimate knowledge of the way in which independent local bodies work, I see that the idea of getting satisfactory work out of them without some sort of official guidance is rather chimerical, and that it is an abuse of our great trust to rid ourselves of our responsibilities and commit them to willing but incompetent hands. Were there sufficient public virtue to make such a policy work well, we should not be in India at all.

The Naddia District was selected as a fit one for the experiment, and I threw myself *con amore* into the details of dividing the district up conveniently, causing experimental councils to be elected, and explaining to the people, in bad Bengali speeches, the objects and reasons of the change. “Sthāniya ātmashāshan” was the only word procurable for local self-government, and not a soul in the district had the faintest idea of what this lengthy word meant. We camped all over our district in the cold weather, 1883–84.

We had a pleasant visit in camp from Elliot Colvin, who had just joined the Civil Service, and then were laid the foundations of a long friendship. We had tied up a goat the night he came, close to our tents, and at dusk a leopard came out of the neighbouring dense jungle and killed it. We sat up through the moonlight: the striking thing was the collection of jackals, which kept hovering round the kill but not daring to touch it, at the same time making night hideous with the peculiar “feu” cry which they make in the vicinity of a beast of prey. When the moon went down the leopard kept coming out and crunching the carcass



while we gave him shots, but we were unable to hit him in the darkness. Our bullocks and horses were in a state of shivering fright. Dense jungle grew round the village because the people were too malaria-stricken to cope with its rapid growth.

I wound up my work in July, 1884, and obtained a year's furlough. We stayed in Calcutta with Sir Auckland Colvin, Elliot's uncle, a particularly genial, clever man. He told us of the Egyptian troubles, in which he had borne a responsible part.

It was while we were at Kishnagar that we got the sad news of Tobin's death from consumption at Kurseong. Tobin had been home on furlough, and I had a glimpse of him on his return, looking worn and anxious. His disease came on with terrible rapidity. He was transferred to Kurseong in Darjeeling District as a last chance, but he couldn't take up the appointment, and died at Dow Hill School, leaving the twins and another child. He was a very fine fellow, of the most cheery and energetic character. His friends subscribed for a stone on his grave in the Kurseong churchyard.

I say nothing of the Ilbert Bill controversy which occupied the hot weather and the rains. In reporting on the Bill, I said that it was a perfectly sound and reasonable measure, in opposition to the Lieutenant-Governor and every other official in Bengal. If it had been passed in the cold weather, when it was introduced, it would have been a very good thing; as events went, the controversy was settled by a miserable fiasco.

We sailed from Calcutta. At Madras was put on board a fine young soldier, the victim of a bad riding accident. From Colombo we were able to run up by the pretty hill railway to Kandy, with its lake and charming Peridenia Botanical Gardens, and strange "burgher" population. We made the railway journey from Suez to Alexandria and landed at Venice.

## CHAPTER XV

1884-85

ITALY, LONDON, FRANCE, SCOTLAND

AT Venice we were quarantined for a few days on our steamer in the lagoon. It was keen early spring weather, and there was no sign of life except the sweet sound of the Venice bells booming to us across the water. The Euganean hills covered with snow were faintly outlined at evening—the rest was a waste of still waters fading into the sky, and gulls swooping about. It was a great moment when we were released and threaded the narrow channel in our ship up to the sumptuous front of the palaces and St. Mark's. We went to the Hôtel de l'Europe and were enchanted with Italy. I had the satisfaction of making my wife open her eyes on the dazzling piazza and front of St. Mark's with the flocks of pigeons circling round. We went about in gondolas and saw the pictures, and visited *trattorias*.

From Venice we went to Verona, Florence and Rome. It was spring, and at Florence the Cascine Gardens, after eight years of India, were charming. The splendour of the civic buildings, the Bargello, appealed to me. We delighted in the Duomo and Giotto's tower and the pictures. John Lewis, an old Indian friend, and his family were installed in apartments. Oscar Browning turned up at the reading-room, exactly the same as ever. At Rome we stayed in the Via di due Macelli. It was Easter week, and we saw a great function at St. Peter's, Cardinal Howard and much ceremony. One day, waiting in a shower of rain and finding no cab, an Italian gentleman stepped

forward and insisted on our using his brougham, captured, I have no doubt, by your mother's appearance.

We had a day at Tivoli and the Villa d'Este, and saw the Coliseum by moonlight and drove out on the Appian Road, the street of tombs. From Rome we went to Milan, and then to Paris, where we were met at the station by the Warre-Cornishes. They stayed at the Hôtel St. Romain, the family hotel in the Rue St. Roch, while we went to the Hôtel Voltaire on the quay of the Rive Gauche, and were waited on by the famous waiter Charles in his red coat. We went to St. Denis, and saw Sarah in *La Dame aux Camélias*, and Delaunay in *Mlle de Belle Isle*, at the Français, and Jane Hading in *Le Maître de Forges*. We stopped at Amiens at a cold, draughty inn, and crossed over to Dover, reaching Victoria in the evening. We drove to South Mead, Wimbledon, our new home.

When I could, I went to the debates in the House of Commons. Gladstone was carrying the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourers; Gordon was being sent to Khartoum to extricate the garrison.

I got to know Mr. Barnett at Whitechapel, and was present at the opening of Toynbee Hall by Mr. Seeley. I offered myself for work and was deputed to go round and persuade mothers to send their children to school. I found this a very difficult job, resulting generally in my presenting the mothers with a florin. I learnt something of the East End.

I had a little walking tour in Brittany with friends: at Brest there was a *concours hippique* and a fair. The hostelry was crowded. At night there was a gala performance at the theatre, when *Madame Favart* was given. The vie de province was well illustrated by the Admiral, Préfet, and local notabilities in uniform and their ladies in the boxes; it was like a scene out of Balzac. We went to pretty, wooded Dinard and Dinan; to St. Michel across the sands, and returned by St. Malo.

I shot at Wimbledon for the Indian eight for the Kol-

hapur Cup, against England, Guernsey and Jersey, and of course we were badly defeated, being an absolutely scratch team.

In August we all gathered for the summer holidays at North Berwick, where Richmond and I learnt to play golf. We had expeditions to Haddington, the home of Jane Welsh Carlyle, where her grave is with its sad inscription, and to Dunbar, where we followed the details of Cromwell's battle. We were at Loch Tay on a Sunday for an impressive Gaelic service; the people came in for the day, camping between the services.

Then your mother and I had a tour, in perfect, still autumn weather to Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond, Glasgow, Abbotsford and Scott's border country on the Tweed side.



## CHAPTER XVI

1885-88

### SERAMPORE AND HOWRAH

IN January we left for India again. We had a beautiful day over the St. Gothard, covered with snow, and sailed from Venice. The terrible news of Gordon's death reached us at Aden. We stayed at Ajmere and went on elephants to the old palace. From there your mother went to see her parents at Roorkee, I to Calcutta, taking Ajmere and Agra on the way. We were posted to the Serampore subdivision of the Hoogly district, and there we settled for three years. Serampore is an old Danish settlement on the river just opposite Barrackpore Park, fourteen miles above Calcutta. It was a quaint old-fashioned little town, with a pretty drive along the river-bank, and a fine library belonging to the Baptist Community. We occupied the old Danish Government House, a huge, lofty building with a pretty garden, approached by an imposing-looking gateway with the Danish Royal Arms upon it. In front is an avenue of casuarinas leading to the old spired Lutheran church. Mouldy villas stood on the water's edge. It was a queer old-world place which rather took our fancy. The reach of the river was a noble one; we were close to Calcutta—half an hour by rail; there were pleasant rides. I was busy with my magisterial and general administration work. The population included many litigious and well-to-do Baboos. The Calcutta High Court was within easy reach, and the smallest order or sentence or acquittal was invariably the subject of a motion in the High Court. The section of the Criminal Procedure Code, which specially

forbade any such interference, was completely set aside by the honourable judges, and they occupied themselves with the tiniest details of administration at vast expense to the tax-payer, but none to my peace of mind, for it was distinctly amusing to watch old precedents raked up, and the curious appeal judgment delivered. We used to go often to Calcutta, and had friendly visits from our Calcutta friends. We had the use of a twin boat with a platform between the boats carrying a big lateen sail. Edgar, Sir Auckland Colvin, Walter Lawrence, Dr. Busted, Arthur Chapman and others visited us. The boat, the *Macijo*, belonged to our friend Mr. Delves Broughton. In this we learnt the art of sailing, and spent long afternoons and evenings on the river, running up to Hoogly and the French settlement of Chandernagore. April and May were the months for the nor'-westers, which used to get up in the evening with great suddenness, and we had many an exciting run before them to reach our bank. When things got very bad the old Mahommedan lascar, who constituted the crew in his own person, used to fall on his knees and say his prayers, leaving us to manage the boat as best we could.

It was in December, 1885, that Lionel and Eleanor Tennyson drove up unexpectedly to our door one evening after dinner. They had been in the Viceroy's camp and were full of the Dufferins. We showed them our country, took them to Chandernagore and called on the French Governor, who had an air of being profoundly busy, but did not appear in reality to have much to do. Lionel went on to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, to shoot with Bedford, while Eleanor stayed with us. We had arranged for a visit to Darjeeling together in February, when Lionel was taken ill. He lay ill for a long time in a bungalow in Barrackpore Park. We went over often. When the Viceregal people left we went to stay at Government House, Calcutta, where Lionel lay desperately ill. The weather was getting hotter and hotter, and the case seemed hopeless. We started with them in the

steamer from Calcutta. I had to turn back at Madras, and I shall always remember Lionel's look and smile as he said good-bye, lying on the deck in the hot Madras roadstead. He died in the Red Sea "under the hard Arabian moon."

Lord Dufferin was an interesting figure as a Viceroy, with his bronzed, Eastern-looking face and diplomatic smile. He used to give men's dinners at which he held the company with his reminiscences—tales of Mrs. Norton and Disraeli, and of his Russian experiences.

At Serampore we had a Glee Club conducted by a Scottish mill assistant, and recruited chiefly from the mill people. The jute mills were a great feature in our surroundings. Unlike the indigo factories, there was never any trouble between the mill assistants and the labourers. The mill hands were left to shift for themselves for living quarters, with the result that their houses were most crowded, insanitary, and subject to bad outbreaks of cholera and other diseases. Any expenditure by the mill-owners would be repaid twice over in keeping their labour. This point came home to many owners, who were an enlightened class.

And now I come to the year 1887, when our Theo was born, and life was transformed for us by her presence. In the hot weather I officiated at Howrah for three months, my first independent charge of a district. Howrah corresponds to the Surrey side of the water in London. It is a busy region of jute-mills and iron-works and much hammering. The magistrate's house was set in the midst of all the din, and near a noisy railway-siding; but, in spite of the noise and the smuts, we liked the great double-storied house with its long verandah, getting the breeze off the river. We used to drive in to Calcutta; but the best place in those hot days was the bridge over the Hoogly, from which there was a great view of the shipping and the cool draught always blowing across.

Theo was born on June 7, in the late evening. The weather was very hot and sultry. I had returned oppor-

tunely from an inspection tour. I paced the verandah that sultry night in great anxiety. The constellation Scorpio was in great glory in the southern sky. She was christened Theodosia by our Padre, Mr. Rolfe, in Howrah Church. Your mother's dear old ayah, Bifātan, became Theo's nurse, and was very proud of her charge. This ayah was a quaint, sensible Mahommedan up-country woman, with a head resembling that of Savonarola. She wore trousers in the up-country fashion, and regarded your mother as her child. It was great fun to see her with Theo, squatting and talking to her in the sagest way. She continued most devoted to our family, and to the last communicated regularly with us.

Sir Steuart Bayley had become Lieutenant-Governor and was at Barrackpore, from which he came over to see us and took us out in his launch. I completely fail to understand why the Bengalis clamour for a Governor from England. It wants great knowledge, not only of India but of the particular province, to enable a Governor to do good, useful work. We civilians know that we are only beginning to understand our adopted country as we are leaving it for good. The English-bred Governor has no notion of what he has been sent out to do. His public utterances are absurd. We had great statesmen from Bengal for Governors since 1854, when it was first created a separate charge. Frederick Halliday, John Peter Grant, William Grey, George Campbell, Temple, Rivers Thompson, were a fine succession. Sir Steuart Bayley, then in the prime of life, was the son of a civilian who had acted as Governor-General. He had served continuously without furlough for twenty years, and was honoured and respected by the leading Bengalis. To compare with such a man the average peer or M.P. was ludicrous.

There was an absurd Government rule giving sixpence to every man who satisfied the district officer that he had killed a poisonous snake. Snakes are regarded by some ■■■ divinities, and, as no cultivator in his senses would care to spend a week in dancing attendance at court to get a reward



of sixpence, there was scanty response to the Government offer. But one ingenious individual, seeing that an honourable livelihood was to be gained from the sirkar's coffers, bred poisonous snakes in considerable numbers and used to come in with a large basketful periodically to destroy before the magistrate and—go home with the reward. My Calcutta friends used to come over, when they heard that the snake-charmer was expected, to study every variety of poisonous snake before they were whacked on the head and demolished. Then the pied piper would retire to his out-of-the-way hut (nobody could find out where he lived) and go on with his interesting snake-culture.

From Serampore I went to Alipore as magistrate for three months. The house and garden, which were occupied by my great-uncle, Richmond Thackeray, from 1811 to 1815, were pleasant.

I remember taking Theo in my arms when she came down from Darjeeling, and her smiling and smiling away at me, for the first time clearly recognising her father. She continued to smile at me the rest of her life.

I had an amusing little piece of duty at Chandernagore. Our authorities were much exercised at the conduct of the French officials. A bailiff sent to execute the process of the British Government against a debtor had been seized and imprisoned on the pretext that he had overstepped the boundary and had acted illegally on French soil. The matter went up to the Indian Foreign Office, and I was deputed, with much formality, to inquire. I went to Chandernagore and met an effete French colonial official, the *juge de paix*, old and yellow. He was delighted to let me take the whole matter in hand, examine the witnesses and write the report. The settlement had been left in charge of an uppish youth who had been playing pranks. I unravelled this tangled skein in diplomatic language and in excellent French, the result of a confabulation with the Bucklands' French governess, and the old *juge* was only too happy to append his signature. We sealed the treaty over an excellent dinner *en famille* with

his large colonial family. The following day I set off for a fortnight's trip to Rangoon. I stayed with Jack Lewis, a barrister friend, and fell in love with the great Pagoda, the Shwey Dagon, and the Burmese.

On the voyage back we had an absurd German Grand Duke and his suite among the fellow passengers. He and his party sat away from the other passengers during meals. For his delectation after dinner a loud mechanical organ was set to work by one of his henchmen.

Howrah District is cut up by rivers, and we had some travelling in a house-boat that cold weather, with the bairn. We combined this with Calcutta sociabilities. I remember returning unexpectedly from camp, going to bed, and being awakened at 2 a.m. by my wife's *poudrée* head, returning from a ball.

At the beginning of the hot weather I was delighted to hear from Edgar, who had become Sir Steuart's Prime Minister, that he was sending us to Darjeeling. I was to be Inspector-General of Registration, a travelling appointment with liberty to come to Darjeeling for some months.

## CHAPTER XVII

1888

### DARJEELING

I took the family up to Darjeeling at Easter. Theo was an excellent little traveller, and the only thing she minded was the hooting of the steamer's whistle. An absurd *contretemps* occurred on the journey. I got into the wrong carriage at Sara, and was whirled off to the dismal station of Rungpore while they went to Darjeeling. I lost one of my precious three days.

We were in despair at the prospect of a boarding-house to leave my wife in. But the difficulty was solved by an invitation from the Jarretts to share Little Chevrement with them. This proved a most satisfactory arrangement. Colonel Jarrett, a cultured man, who translated Heine, was filling the position of Examiner in Eastern Languages. Their jolly, fat little boy, Aubrey, played with Theo, who called him "Auby, Auby." Theo developed into the softest, most winning little thing, with her "coos" and white, fluffy hair. She was always smiling, and excited admiration as she was wheeled about in her pram.

The Sikkim expedition was going on, a mild warfare against the rudely armed Tibetans, who had taken alarm at a proposed mission and built a wall across the Jeleptra trade route. Our troops were encamped at Gnatong below the pass, which I had visited. Sir Steuart Bayley paid our troops a visit, and on the same night the Tibetans made an attack, perfectly ineffective. On fine days Darjeeling could heliograph 100 miles to Gnatong. Sol-

diers in khaki going to the front were to be met on the forest roads.

The Shrubbery or Government House was a pleasant house in those days. We had Shakespeare readings, Sir Steuart taking the dignified parts of Prospero, the Duke, etc. Sir Alfred Croft gave little dinners in his snug bachelor cottage. We had sunrise picnics to Senchal, and visits to the tea-gardens.

Lyon was acting as deputy commissioner temporarily. He was doing too much and had been looking white and unwell when he was seized with internal hemorrhage, and died, aged thirty-two. I saw him just before—still able to give me a smile. We put on his tombstone in the Darjeeling Cemetery :

“For who can always act ? but he  
To whom ■ thousand memories call,  
Not being less but more than all  
The gentleness he seemed to be,

“Best seemed the thing he was, and joined  
Each office of the social hour  
To noble manners, as the flower  
And native growth of noble mind.”

I liked my new work of general superintendence over the officers of registration of deeds in Bengal. I was my own master and could travel where I liked, and look up my friends. In the hot weather I went to see Whitmore at Soori and Carstairs at Doomka, Bourdillon at Chupra and Tytler at Sewān. I lived for a time in Calcutta with Marsden, the Police Magistrate, and Judge Norris, a radical barrister and an amusing, downright character. How he hated Indian life ! He loved to tell us his bar stories of the western circuit. In the rains I arranged for a house-boat and tug, and went a tour with my Police Superintendent through canals and the Sunderbans to Khoolna, paying surprise visits to the Registration Officers on the banks.

In November 1888 the sad news of my dear mother's





SIR RICHMOND RITCHIE, K.C.B., UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,  
IN HIS ROOM AT THE INDIA OFFICE.

1843

1843

death reached me by telegram, and we took three months' leave home, by Bombay and Marseilles. My wife managed wonderfully without a nurse. Our white-haired baby was a great favourite on board ; one day at dinner, we looked up and saw her in the butcher's arms. For the first time we came through the canal using the electric light. We were met at Marseilles by my two sisters and Edith Sichel.

We went to the Hôtel de la Poste at Avignon. It was bitter cold weather, and we sat together in the comfortable warm salon talking. The Pope's great buildings were gloomy and forbidding in the *mistral*.

Félicie met us in Paris and we stopped at the St. Romain and had the usual play-going. We saw Judie as Mlle Nitouche, and the *Abbé Constantin* at the Gymnase. Paris was under snow. Theo looked a little red dot in her scarlet cape with Félicie in the snowy Tuileries. It seemed strange, but appropriate, to see my little daughter there.

Richmond had taken a house in Lexham Gardens and received us most hospitably. All the cousins were gathered in the hall to welcome their little Indian visitor, and made an escort to carry her upstairs, as she was very tired. Her white hair used to get quite black in the murky London fogs, but she was always in a good humour, and prattled away to her visitors. She used to imitate the Calcutta crows. Uncle Ted was established in his new practice at Camberley and we paid him two visits, enjoying a day's hunting in his company. We had a very short stay in Paris on the way back. The street boys were calling out the last news about Boulanger in front of the little *salle à manger* at the St. Romain. Faithful Félicie saw us through as usual. We made the long railway journey to Brindisi, stopping the night at the Hôtel Brun at Bologna. Theo was wonderfully good. I carried her on board at Brindisi on a balmy night, with her eyes wide open, and she noticing everything. We travelled on a crowded Australian steamer, the *Victoria*. We seemed quite lost in the crowd, and had our meals at a little table on a lower

deck frequented only by Australians who did not love a crowd.

Theo was one year and eight months, and had just learnt to toddle. She delighted in running up and down the deck, her white hair streaming behind her in the wind.



## CHAPTER XVIII

1888-90

### MOORSHEDABAD

WE stayed at the Bucklands' in Calcutta and then went to Berhampore, district Moorshedabad, at the beginning of the hot weather.

Our house was in the corner of a big square, built for cantonment purposes in old days; at the back we looked out on the river, the Bhāgirathi, a river which takes off from the Ganges, and which forms the western limit of the Ganges Delta on which Calcutta is situated. The house had a particularly picturesque interior, the drawing-room being enclosed by Moorish arches, with passages all round and a marble floor. Near us were the Gallois', a bourgeois family from Lyons engaged in silk manufacture. Eugène and Alphonse were amusing old Frenchmen, while Madame was voluble and very French. They had pretty children, who played with Theo. At the same time as we arrived there had come a strange couple. He was a newly arrived civilian, a handsome if rather sickly-looking young man, entirely educated at home, in Ireland, with his head full of the most advanced ideas, a theosophist, radical, vegetarian and I know not what else. I found him a difficult subordinate to train. His wife was a Russian girl, red-haired, with great blue eyes. There was something very taking about her, but she was wild and uncouth. This original pair were christened the Popoffs. I have a soft corner for them in my heart, as they were very appreciative of Theo.

We liked the station well enough. There was good riding, and I played golf with fine old Stocks, a silk-producer. Some twelve miles off was the decaying town of Moorshedabad, full of pensioners, where the descendant of the ever historic Nawāb Nāzim lived. He had a gorgeous palace, full of chandeliers and gewgaws, where we stayed sometimes. One of his brothers had married an Englishwoman called by us the Princess Elisa, a good-natured person, who brought up a large family. There were hundreds of relatives of the Nawāb, who used to play tennis, decked in spangles and all the colours of the rainbow.

We were much exercised and at the same time amused by Sarah Begum, an Englishwoman with whom the late Nawāb had gone through some sort of marriage ceremony before the Lord Mayor of London. Sarah was of humble origin, but looked every inch a queen. She came to enforce her supposed rights, and to claim her two daughters, who were being brought up in the Zenana, though she had formally resigned the custody of them. She lived at the palace at war with the world of Mahommedan relations, complaining of being insulted and of attempts being made on her life. The Nawāb himself was a gentlemanly old Musalmān, bearing strong traces in his features and thick lips of the Abyssinian slave-girl who was his mother. Theo looked at him with wonder. He was much troubled by Sarah Begum, his step-mother, and in the midst of the *embarras* caused by her presence the poor old gentleman had a paralytic seizure. He did not care for his huge palace, and when I went to see him he was lying in a little insignificant (*darwan's*) or door-keeper's lodge. A monkey was playing about and a miscellaneous and interested crowd of relations was surrounding him. All the riff-raff of the town were crowding outside. It was a pathetic spectacle.

There was a good deal of tinsel bravery about Moorshedabad—elephants and camels and carriages and a band. The Nawāb used to give gorgeous entertainments, and was much liked by the European community. As the rains came on, our darling little girl became very washed

out. I remember her second birthday, when she was a mass of prickly heat, and had a bad cold, but went about among the motley little band of children who had been whipped up for her *festa* by her mother's genius.

I had an anxious time in the district with floods. The country was protected by an embankment, but in the height of the rains it was always a question whether the earthwork was secure. In 1889 the river rose to an unprecedented height, and the *bunds*<sup>1</sup> gave way. I had a great deal of boating, and got three duckings in the river in a week. When the first breach in the embankment occurred I got a light boat and went down the broad current flowing over the country quickly, but we got caught among the trees and our boat sank. I sat with the boatman on a babal-tree; but, as there was no prospect of deliverance, we made a line with our hands and worked our way hanging on to trees through the flood, which was running swiftly, to the high land. Sir Steuart Bayley came to see what we officials were doing, and, as we were returning in the night to our launch, I missed my footing in the darkness and went plump into the river. Somebody caught hold of me as I was swept by and hauled me in. Sir Steuart had a long day and finished up at Moorshedabad. We drove out with the Nawāb, looking like a paroquet dressed in grey silk, in a shut carriage to see the floods. The rain was coming down and presently the water flowed all round us and into the carriage, and we stuck fast—an absurd experience.

I had a month's boating over the flooded track. The village sites stood above flood-level, and on these were crowded together the villagers and cattle, while the rest of the country was submerged. The Government of India formally thanked me for my flood work. For me it was a jolly open-air holiday, and the deposit of silt enriched the soil so much that the cultivators were not to be pitied overmuch.

I had some pig-sticking, very exciting, but a perilous joy

<sup>1</sup> The embankments.

for me, as I was a poor rider. Once a boar ran in between Chancellor's legs and we were all on the ground together. The boar got up first and went for my horse, who reared up and struck at him with his fore-legs. Another time Rufus bucked me off just in front of the pig.

Theo went about in a bullock-cart on springs. She enjoyed camp life as much as you have done, Peggy, the playing about in the shade and round the tents. She had fits of madcap merriment, toddling about and hiding behind trees. The volunteer sergeant's wife, Mrs. Woody, was constituted her nurse. Woody had a fat cottage child—Mirrie—and Mirrie and Theo were brought up together. They were a great contrast. Mirrie boisterous and bold, but an excellent companion, and Theo loved her, always giving in.

W. H. Page, the judge, a genial, musical Wykehamist, chummed with us. He made Theo say absurd speeches, "I feel drawn to Page," and to stand up and declaim. We had a meet, a fancy dress ball, and Lecocq's *The Blind Beggars*, enacted by Page and myself, the only actors in our tiny community.

Yesterday, my Peggy, you attended High Mass at the historic church of St. John's, Malta. I had taken you and your little board-ship friends on shore and we went first to St. John's. So there you sat on a straw chair in your red cape and red *béret*, looking very protestant. Afterwards you were all regaled with chocolate and cakes in an upper room of a pastrycook's with a balcony giving on the bustling Strada Reale. It was cold bright weather, and I renewed that well-known pleasurable sensation, the first taste of Europe, a land where the people in the streets are clothed and go cheerily about their business, and one does not feel a sahib, a solitary unit, as one walks among the crowd.

You liked the armoury, Peggy, and you deigned to glance at the portrait of the Grand Master, Pinto, and to inquire about him. Will you carry away any recollection,



I wonder, of the grey, flat-topped houses, bearing traces  
I cannot help thinking of the Phœnician, Carthaginian,  
and Arab dominion, or of the double-chinned Maltese  
women in their black hoods, and the bold cliffs close to  
which our steamer ran ?

## CHAPTER XIX

1890-92

### DEPUTY COMMISSIONERSHIP OF DARJEELING

As the hot weather was setting in at Berhampore, we got a letter from our friend Edgar, the appointment secretary, one day, that made the whole household execute war dances of delight. We were to go to Darjeeling. There was no news which could have elated me more.

We started in June, a large party, with Mirrie and Woody. A long drive took us through the district to a planter friend's indigo factory on the Ganges, whence we made a steamer journey to Sara Ghat, and took the train to Kurseong, where we slept. My sister-in-law and I strolled over to the chief bungalow, Constantia, and found Archdale Earle and his wife having an *al fresco* breakfast in their verandah. We went straight to Auckland House in Darjeeling, where we found the Evans Gordons and the Claude Whites to greet us. From Auckland House there is a fine view of the snows. Theo was not well at first, but she soon developed roses in her cheeks and we used to think her quite robust.

The change from the dust and the heat to the quiet and cool of the great mountains, and the English feeling of the snug house, was most grateful. I enjoyed my work and found it pleasanter than any I had had. The hill folk were of the simplest character, and charming people to deal with. The work was unique in itself, and every part of the district was interesting. My wife made our house very pretty, and we used to entertain hospitably. With

our books round us, we did not mind the rain, which averaged one inch a day. Knyvett, my police superintendent, and I went out in the rain very soon for a round of the tea-gardens, and down to the Terai. Here it was one continual tale of fever and illness for the tea planters. With October came bracing cold and the clearest skies. We rushed out in the mornings in our dressing-gowns to see the peaks flush pink in succession, and the dark shadows over the valley retreating. Theo was too small for the rough camping in hill tents, but she came out to camp with me sometimes, once to Kalimpong, stopping on the way in the bungalow on the banks of the green, swirling Teesta at the Suspension Bridge. From Kalimpong my wife and her sister went to Sikkim, and I brought Theo home alone. We stayed the night at Peshok with good Munro—always a bachelor—and the next day she rode all the way, eighteen miles, on my saddle in front of me into Darjeeling. What nice talks we had, just as you and I have them now, my Peg. She was very fond of flowers. Woody used to say, “It wouldn’t be Theo if she hadn’t a flower in her hand.” She had gone to bed one night, and I was coughing and clearing my throat in the next room. When I came in she said, in a funny way, “Was that you, Papa? I thought it was God being angry with me.”

We went in largely for the sociabilities of the little station. Your mother and I, I blush to avow, acted in *A Happy Pair*, and I played Sam Gerridge in *Caste* with the diminutive Miss J. as Polly. Edgar chummed with us and lived in a cottage attached to our house. We had visits from notabilities in the cold weather, on whom I had to dance attendance. Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy, came up and won all hearts; Lord Wenlock, Governor of Madras, who had been at Whitnash Rectory, came, and Prince Dam Rong from Siam. Prince Dam Rong (I am not sure of the spelling of the name) had a train of marquises and counts under the conduct of Mr. Verney of the London County Council. Mr. Verney explained that the English titles merely corresponded to the Siamese ones. They

were rather humble alumni of King's College, London, who enjoyed galloping about on hired ponies, evidently a new experience. The Cezarewich, the unfortunate Nicholas II, was to have come, but his visit was postponed at the last minute from dread of assassins. We had other Russian travellers, a Prince six feet six inches tall, in a pot hat, with his Calmuck-looking Princess. Bernard Holland paid us a delightful visit and came out to Kalimpong. But the most memorable visitors were Canon Barnett and his wife from Whitechapel, with their friend Miss Paterson. Their stay marked red-letter days for us; their conversation was the most stimulating and novel that I ever got from any English travellers. Barnett's interest in everything and everybody down to the humblest Bhootiya woman in the bazaar, his wide views on our administration, his searching questions, were most refreshing. I have never met a better traveller, or one who seemed to understand better the conditions of Anglo-Indian life. He had been staying with the Viceroy. One day they were all looking on at a game of polo when one of the ponies' leg putties came undone, and the syce ran on to the ground to put it right. The rider gave his syce some smacks with his polo stick for his carelessness. Barnett's wrath was stirred, and he ran out waving his stick and shouting "Shame, shame," before his swell hosts.

At Lord Lansdowne's visit there was a *contretemps* which caused me great vexation. Among other expeditions he went out to Tongloo rest-house on the top of a high mountain, 10,000 feet above sea-level. I omitted the precaution of seeing that the rest-house was not occupied by travellers, an almost impossible contingency for the time of year, December. As luck would have it, an old Colonel had got a pass unknown to me, and when the Viceroy's party arrived, they found him installed in possession, having refused all requests to go. As there were only three rooms, Lord Lansdowne and his party were considerably inconvenienced. My Nepalese Inspector, Hari Dās, was the first to inform me, "The Viceroy was wild, sir;



very angry." We went to a big dinner, given by Lord Lansdowne that night, in some trepidation. But Lord Lansdowne was kindness itself, and had quite recovered his good-humour—if he had ever lost it. I may be allowed to say that he is a man of extraordinary charm of manner and kindness of heart. I always feel grateful to him for overlooking a scrape which might have brought me into trouble.

Yesterday, the day after leaving Malta, was a very perfect day as we ran close to the rocky shore of Tunis. The few clouds took that roundness which they do only in the softest light. Algiers, with its hillside dotted with villas, was very distinct.

I spent a good deal of time at Kalimpong at the pleasant bungalow which had grown up below my old one. There was a land settlement, and it was a delight to walk about the fields all day and lie under the shade of orange-trees when tired out and be supplied with oranges by the villagers. A church and school and manse had risen up for the missionaries, the Grahams, who did such admirable work since. The local Rajah Tenduk was a great friend of mine, a very honest, loyal man. He entertained us with *murwa* and flour tea.

It was a pretty sight to see ■ Tibetan dance, the gaily dressed mummers with their antics, the ring of spectators packed densely on the knolls, and the background of the chalet-like monastery, the white fluttering flags, and mountains all round. The music consisted chiefly of clashing cymbals, but when the peacock came on in the masque, there would be an accompaniment of dulcet flutes. Then there would be dances by the yaks and the lion. Sometimes we had a dance in front of our house by torchlight. Theo delighted in them, and used to imitate the dancers.

I recall a glorious, clear winter day when we received ■ Chinese Embassy that had journeyed across from Lhasa.

They came along with shaggy, jingling ponies and a wild Tibetan guard. All round was the grand panorama of snowy peaks. The Ambassadors, two Chinese and one Tibetan, settled down in Darjeeling to negotiate for three years, the result being a treaty on a small piece of notepaper of which the provisions were worth nothing. They were hospitable and jovial people, and were always entertaining us with champagne dinners. The chief Chinaman was a victim to opium.

One spring I went out by the high-level road, 12,000 feet, to Sandakphoo and Phalut. Most beautiful was the effect of the snows seen through the blood-red flowers of the rhododendron forest at Tongloo. Up there one seemed to be on the roof of the world, and to breathe an uncontaminated air. I met Claude White on the road and we went to some of the Sikkim monasteries. We were accommodated in the temples, and would wake up to the visions of strange painted devils and the tortures of the Buddhist hell. The monks in their yellow, sleeveless robes and their red peaked skull-caps looked like mediæval characters.

Knyvett, the policeman, was my companion in camping. He was a thorough sportsman, and it was a treat to see him call a pheasant up by imitating its whistle, and to pull great mahseer out of the river. We had been to a river, the Jaldokha, on the Bhutan boundary, and were returning to our camp one evening, when we met an enormous brown bear in a field of Indian corn. We hadn't our guns, and the bear slowly retired, looking at us. In the Terai we met Earle and shot jungle-fowl and snipe. Here I got fever, which stuck to me for some time.

The Maharani of Cooch Behar used to entertain us at dinners served in the Indian fashion. Life was pleasant in the little Indian society, which numbered (to give them their subsequent titles) Sir Edward Henry, Sir Herbert Risley, Sir Elliot Colvin, and my old friend Sir Henry Cotton. I never met a man more enthusiastic for Indians and their cause than Sir Henry. He loved them "not wisely, but too well," for subsequently in the British Parliament he

was imprudent and did his cause little good. Sir Steuart left and was succeeded by a king who knew not Joseph, Sir Charles Elliot, the first Lieutenant-Governor who had had no previous experience of Bengal. In process of time I came to appreciate Sir Charles's sterling character, his marvellous power of work and his humility. But for five years in Bengal we unfortunately did not get on well together. The fault was, no doubt, on my side, and I learnt very much from him.

## CHAPTER XX

1892-96

### CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY

IN June 1892, much to my surprise, I was appointed Chairman of the Calcutta Municipality to act for Harry Lee with the prospect of succeeding him. I had three months of very hard work, but it was responsible and interesting and novel. I lived at 21, Loudon Street. In September I took furlough and we went across to Bombay. At Bombay I stayed with the Acworths at a charming house on Malabar Hill, commanding a view of the sea and white sails. In the rains the bay is one of the most picturesque places imaginable : the blue hills all standing out, and the great breakers dashing in contrasting with the palms and vegetation. We rowed out to our steamer. "How bunchy the waves are!" said Theo. She was five years old and able to enjoy things even more than you do now, Peg. We reached the Bitter Lakes and Ismailia at night, and said good-bye to the ship in the moonlight, were rowed to the jetty in a boat, and found ourselves in the fragrant night in avenues of spreading tamarinds and date-palms at Ismailia. There was a little street and a rough restaurant hotel, with Egyptians and Levantines walking about.

It was pleasant the next morning at breakfast in the café when the laden camels poked their noses in to see how we were getting on. Then we hired a donkey for Theo and walked about the shady avenues. Theo screamed with delight over everything. At midday we took the train and reached Cairo in the evening after a dusty



journey. At the station we were caught up in a magnificent carriage and pair and galloped over to Shepherd's Hotel. Great fun it was looking with Theo at the crowds below from the balcony of our room.

But Theo could not come with us everywhere, and we had to arrange for someone to look after her. "Pharaoh," the *maître d'hôtel*, produced an Austrian Baroness who had just arrived. She used to sit reading her book while Theo played about in the hotel garden, or the Esbekiye Gardens in our absence. One day she was taken all day to a Roman Catholic convent. Theo told us about it when we came back, the nuns and the girls.

My wife and I did the Pyramids and visited the wonderful Serapæum or underground chambers with granite sarcophagi of the sacred bulls, and the fascinating tomb of Ti. We went to the Boulak Museum, and the mosques and the bazaars. Theo was allowed some sight-seeing. I recall the little white-haired figure in the mosques, pleased to slip about in the enormous yellow list shoes that are worn over the boots. At an ancient mosque, the guide was pointing out to us the holy niche at the Mecca end, the Kaaba,—“Kaba, Kaba,” called out Theo, and in a trice she had slipped into the holy of holies and stood there smiling at us.

From Cairo we went to Naples. The parents of an Anglo-Italian assistant of mine, Carlo Alberto Radice, were residents there and had been apprised of our coming. They had a fine, curly-haired, black-eyed little boy, and gave us a hospitable welcome. Theo spent her days with the Radices while we went sight-seeing—to Vesuvius and Capri and the blue grotto. It was lovely weather; the road by the sea led through horse-chestnuts and woods in autumnal colouring.

From Naples we went to Rome, where Dr. Charles, my old Calcutta friend who had hospitably seen me through my fever caught at Diamond Harbour, was kind. They took Theo in altogether, and she played with their little boy. There was a story that she made friends with a little Duke

on the Pincio. The beloved child got a sore throat and was feverish, and we were anxious about her.

The Stillman household took us out for two golden days—once to Tivoli, and once to Hadrian's Villa. The woods were in great autumn beauty. The Stillmans were delighted with Theo. I had been telling Theo the story of Joseph: "Tell me more about Jovis—or, what's his name? What was the name of the other boy—Pharaoh?"

We went to Sir John Edgar's at Florence—the Villa Guicciardini looking over the city. The floors were paved; there was a window from which the Pope had blessed the people; in front was a fine cedar—at the bottom of the garden an olive-tree orchard. We renewed the old delight in the pictures and the architecture. Edgar let us come and go as we pleased. There was a little genteel society to meet us at the villa. The weather turned bitter cold. We went to Fiesole and to the Certosa Convent. From Florence we had a day at Pisa. Theo went up the leaning tower. "My legs do lean so when I go up this tower!" From Pisa we had a beautiful day to Genoa, with glimpses of the sea through the tunnels. We reached Genoa late at night, and went to the first hotel we saw—a very rough one near the station. We took Theo out with us the next day and had lunch at a restaurant in the crowded business part, and a long drive afterwards round the amphitheatre of hills. We had to start very early—11 a.m. It was a bright, cold November morning when we reached Milan, and a most beautiful day for the St. Gothard. The snow and the icicles were all gleaming in the sun, the firs laden with snow. Theo thoroughly enjoyed it and called it Christmas Tree Country. One remembers little things.

Kind Félicie welcomed us as usual at the Hôtel St. Romain. We went to *Hernani* on the night of arrival, and on successive nights to *Frou-frou* and *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*. Félicie told Theo about our youth and how she had brought us up. Theo took it all in with wonder—and how Félicie had bathed her big papa.

We were met by relations at Victoria, and drove off to Carlyle Mansions, to Mr. Thomas Hare's flat that my sister had taken for us. Theo was at once perfectly at home with all the aunts and cousins. We started a kindergarten for her at Miss Gaze's, where I used to take her every morning. She seemed to get on very well, and came back with glowing accounts of her performances.

Our flat in Carlyle Mansions looked over the river and the barges coming up. There are Turneresque effects of winter sun and mist. In front was a little garden with the begrimed statue of old Carlyle sitting in his dressing-gown, round which Theo used to play. At last February came round, and I had the wrench of parting. Your mother came with me as far as Dover. I travelled by the Brindisi express, and we glided through the stations, stopping nowhere. I went straight across from Bombay to Calcutta.

I reoccupied 21, Loudon Street, and from the moment of arrival I was absorbed in municipal work. We have always been extraordinarily liberal in our administration in granting Western privileges of citizenship to Indians, but this had been carried to a ludicrous extent in Calcutta. The town was governed by the chairman, acting with a huge body of commissioners having a voice and a vote in every matter. The average Bengali city father, quite devoid of all practical instincts, but always ready with a perfect arsenal of objections and quibbles, revelled in his right of making interminable speeches. I will not attempt to get any English reader to understand the absurdity of these utterances, for it would be quite impossible. There was practically no local authority over us. In addition, there were a small minority who went in for downright venality and corruption—impossible, of course, to prove against them, but well known to exist. But at the top there were a certain number, like Surendra Nath Banerjea, Bhubaniswar Basu, Natini Mohun Sirkar, and others who had fine ideals. The pity was that they could not influence their more backward fellow commissioners. Very few

Indians have the moral courage to stand up to their fellow countrymen. The popular line for my colleagues to take was to represent themselves as a lot of beneficent angels, giving wise counsels which were not acted upon, while all the executive officers were a gang of fiends, wasting their money, and employed in unnecessary activities. The natural difficulties of administration were great enough, but, with such a constitution, really satisfactory results were impossible. One had to bridle one's tongue, and cajole and appeal to the Councillors to get supplies to carry on work at all. It was understood that the chairman had to keep a smiling face and establish a *modus vivendi* of some sort or another.

The executive part of the work I enjoyed, framing schemes with the engineer and health officers, going my rounds in the morning with them, and everything that was practical. But at the close of each day there was a wrangling committee, which was extremely trying.

The commissioners were a good-natured lot, and appreciated being treated genially and humoured. But one always felt one was in Queer Street: they arranged little intrigues; one could not count on any loyal support. If they were contradicted, they resorted to malicious methods of obstruction. All this gave one lots to do and to think about. I had a dreary time alone in the hot weather and the rains. One day in November I drove in a new landau to the docks to meet my wife and Theo. From this time I will only record a bare skeleton of events. Theo stretched herself in a long chair in the verandah and put her little legs up. She had grown enormously in every way, and was full of her steamer journey and her doings at home. I had got her a little pony, and she began riding at once, when going out with her nurse, Janet.

Soon after Sir Fred Pollock arrived for a six weeks' visit. Then came a niece, so we were a large housefull. There were a good many nice people in Calcutta that cold weather, and we had a sociable time, a succession of dinners and dances. We often went to see Mrs. Brown Potter and



Kyrle Bellew, who were acting very well. Theo's one entertainment was a marionnette show on the Maidān. The dogs performed the Court of Louis XV, Madame de Pompadour and the Duc de Choiseul.

Lord Lansdowne changed places with Lord Elgin. One of my duties was to meet new arrivals at the railway station. I went to Howrah to meet Lord Elgin.

For the hot weather in 1894 I took Newstead House, Darjeeling, which we shared with the Colvins. Theo and Janet went up in April. There my nephew Francis Cornish arrived from his regiment, to pay us a visit. He and his sister both began to shiver simultaneously with fever, and we took the poor things up to Darjeeling. Newstead was the most elastic house, and we had a pleasant party; the little girls played in the little garden in front. We assembled there again in the autumn holidays.

Theo came back to Calcutta for the cold weather. She was seven years old, and had a class at Miss Newall's with other little girls.

We started for England in the *Bengal* in April, 1896, looking forward with high hopes to a long furlough and to bringing Theo back to her cousins and to live her life in England. She was in her ninth year, and we felt it was not possible to keep her any longer with us in Bengal. She was taken ill on the day after we left Colombo with internal inflammation, and died on May 2nd, in the Red Sea, on the day after we had stopped at Aden, conscious to the end, and never more her truest self than at the last. She was buried at sea on the evening of May 2nd, when the sea had gone up and the ship was surrounded by swooping gulls uttering their cries.

*Monday, March 4th.*—Last night, before we got into Gib, was a glorious sunset lighting up the snows of the Sierra Nevada, and throwing purple lights on the hills of the Spanish coast. At dawn this morning, under a red sunrise, we ran into the harbour below the shadow of

the great rock. It had been a clear, balmy morning—the great Sphinx or lion frowning down on the straits surpassed all expectation in grimness and majesty. We have been running close to the Spanish coast, with a good view of the little towns, Algeciras and Tarifa, which we assaulted in the Peninsular. The straits look absurdly narrow—the African mountains very clear. Ceuta and Tangier were visible. The Spanish feluccas and sailing-boats were tacking about, heaving right over.

In July we settled down at Chiddingfold, in a little square house with a garden, close to the church and village green. We had taken it before starting, and had looked forward to Theo's summer in Surrey. She had stayed there three years before, and I could imagine her in that country.

On September 29th, very late at night, you, Peggy, were born. The ground was covered with hoar frost, and it was a still autumn morning when I bicycled over to announce the joyful tidings at the Hurst.

And with this all-important event, Margaret Angela, my record, for you to read some day, must come to an end. Our thoughts were full of Theo and what the coming of her little sister—which she knew about dimly and which she used to pray for—would have been to her. You are already beginning to understand a little, and the other day you said, "I should like to have my little sister." We want her to live for you.



MEMORIAL TABLET TO THEO RITCHIE, EXECUTED BY EFFIE RITCHIE, AT  
THE EAST END OF CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL.





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